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FOR SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES**

GENERAL EDITOR FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT:—

A. F. KIRKPATRICK, D.D.

DEAN OF ELY

**THE TWO
BOOKS OF THE KINGS**

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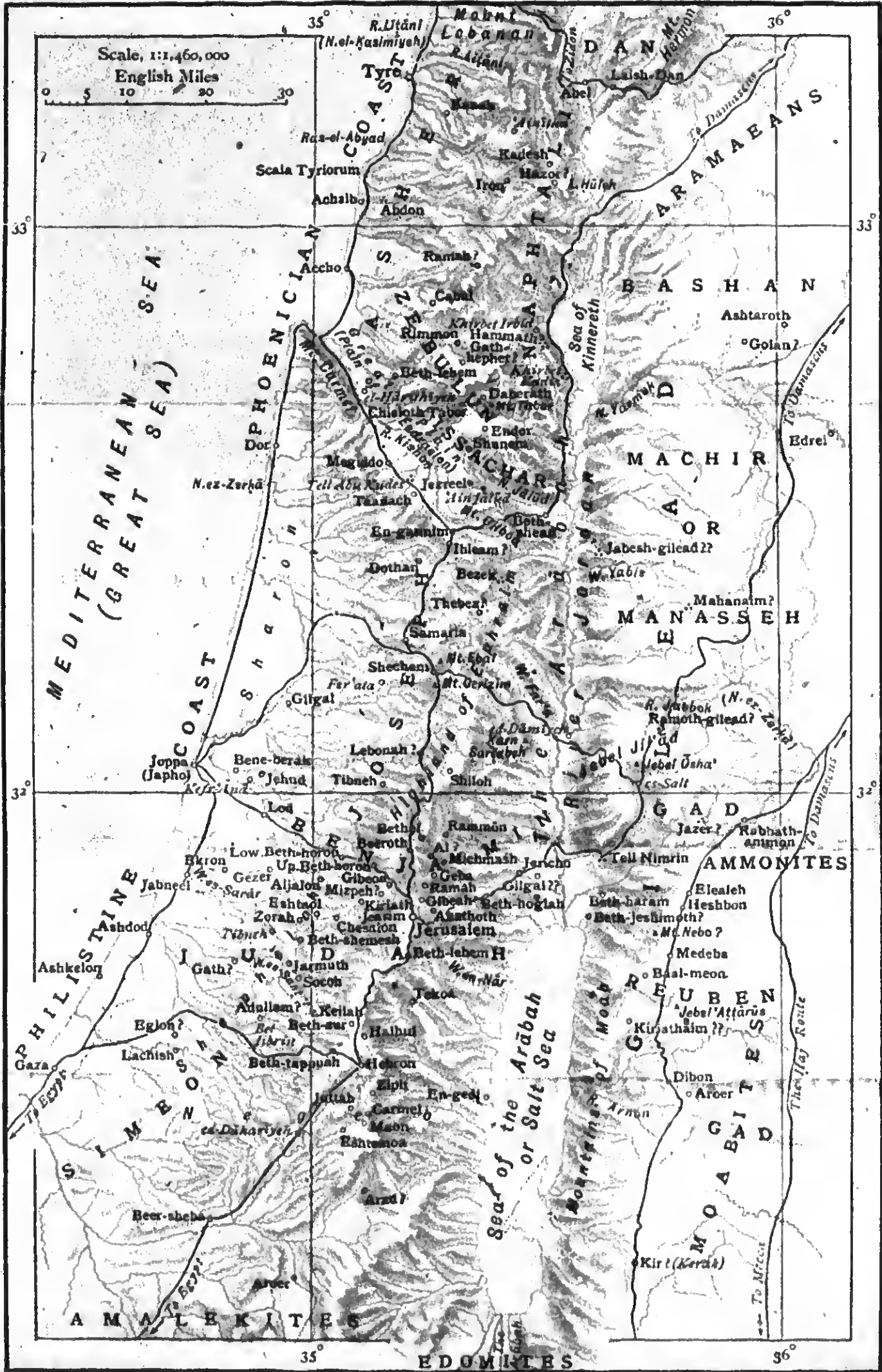


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THE TWO BOOKS OF THE KINGS

In the Revised Version
With Introduction and Notes
by

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PREFACE

BY THE

GENERAL EDITOR FOR THE OLD TESTAMENT.

THE present General Editor for the Old Testament in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges desires to say that, in accordance with the policy of his predecessor the Bishop of Worcester, he does not hold himself responsible for the particular interpretations adopted or for the opinions expressed by the editors of the several Books, nor has he endeavoured to bring them into agreement with one another. It is inevitable that there should be differences of opinion in regard to many questions of criticism and interpretation, and it seems best that these differences should find free expression in different volumes. He has endeavoured to secure, as far as possible, that the general scope and character of the series should be observed, and that views which have a reasonable claim to consideration should not be ignored, but he has felt it best that the final responsibility should, in general, rest with the individual contributors.

A. F. KIRKPATRICK.

CAMBRIDGE.

WHO THROUGH FAITH

SUBDUED KINGDOMS,
WROUGHT RIGHTEOUSNESS,
OBTAINED PROMISES.

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The Holy Land	<i>To face Title</i>
Assyria, Armenia, Syria	<i>At end of Volume</i>

MY WORDS AND MY STATUTES WHICH I
COMMANDED MY SERVANTS THE PROPHETS,
DID THEY NOT OVERTAKE YOUR FATHERS?



INTRODUCTION.

§ I. THE NAME, AND DIVISION INTO TWO BOOKS.

The name *Kings* is a translation of *Mëlachim*, the title prefixed to the book in the printed editions of the Hebrew Bible. The title is however far older than the age of the invention of printing, being found in the Talmud (Baba Bathra 15 a), and in Jerome's *Prologus Galeatus* (prefixed to editions of the Vulgate). The Christian Father in agreement with the Hebrew reckoning specifies Kings as the fourth of the Prophetical books, the first being Joshua. He writes:—

'The fourth book is called among the Jews *Malachim*, that is, "Kings," and is contained in the third and fourth volumes of the work we call "Kingdoms." It is much better to call it *Malachim*, "Kings," than *Malachoth*, "Kingdoms," for it does not describe the kingdoms of a number of nations, but that of the Israelite people alone, of one people indeed composed of twelve tribes.'

The title *Kingdoms* which Jerome here rejects is derived from the Septuagint. The Greek translators taking into account the community of subject reckoned Samuel and Kings as one work divided into four books, and gave it the title of *Βασιλειῶν τέσσαρα*, i.e. the four books of Kingdoms. This was the title best known to the Greek Fathers of the first Four Centuries, e.g. to Melito of Sardis (Euseb. *H.E.* iv. 26), Origen (apud Euseb. *H.E.* vi. 25), Cyril of Jerusalem (*Catech.* iv. 35), Athanasius (*Epist. Heortast.* xxxix.). The Latin form *Regnorum quattuor libri* is found in Rufinus (*in Symbolum*), in Augustine, in the Canon Mommsonianus, and in the Catalogue of Books found in the Codex Claromontanus¹.

¹ Zahn, *Geschichte des N.Tlichen Kanons*, II. pp. 144, 158, 178, 240 ff.

The Vulgate occupies a middle position between the Hebrew and LXX., and reckons Samuel and Kings together as the four books of Kings (*Regum*). The Peshitta speaks with an uncertain voice. Both titles, Kings and Kingdoms, are found in the best MSS., both Jacobite and Nestorian, sometimes side by side, sometimes in different parts of the same MS. The editions reflect this confusion.

There can be no doubt that the title of the book was not settled at the time when the great versions were made. Some Hebrew MSS. offer no title at all from the hand of the original scribe; nothing but a blank space of three or four lines marks the transition from Samuel to Kings¹.

On the other hand it is probable that the first word of the book (*wēhammelech* 'And king') was sometimes used as a title. A Hebrew MS.² of the twelfth or thirteenth century, which has no other title and no head-lines for Kings, exhibits this word standing by itself in the middle of a line to serve as the name of the Book. Similarly it appears that Origen³ considered the Hebrew title of Kings to be *wēhammelech David*, 'And king David.' The book had originally no separate title among the Jews; like Genesis which the Jews called *Bērēshith*, 'In the beginning,' it was sometimes cited by its opening word.

The division of Kings into two books after 1 K. xxii. 53 is quite arbitrary; there is no pause in the history, and the reign of Ahaziah is divided in half without any justification. In Hebrew MSS. the first verse of 2 Kings follows the last verse of 1 Kings with no mark beyond the ordinary verse division⁴. The division into books is due to the Septuagint, whence no doubt it passed over into the Vulgate, and into printed Bibles generally. The MSS. of the Peshitta take no notice of this division, but they introduce two sub-divisions of their own. The

¹ Camb. Univ. Libr. Add. 465 (cent. XII—XIII.) and 468 (cent. XIII—XIV.). In each of these MSS. there is a headline (מלכים, KINGS) from a later hand.

² Camb. Univ. Libr. Add. 467 (French Ashkenazic).

³ Apud Euseb. *H. E.* vi. 25.

⁴ See Camb. Univ. Libr. Add. 465, 467, 468 and Mm. 5. 27. In the first of these a later Scribe has noted the division in the margin.

section 1 K. xvii. 1—2 K. ii. 18 is entitled 'Elijah,' and the following section (2 K. ii. 19—xiii. 21) 'Elisha.' These subdivisions rightly call attention to the prominence of prophetic narratives in Kings.

§ 2. CONTENTS.

The book of Kings gives the history of Israel from the last days of David to the Babylonian Captivity, or, strictly speaking, to the reign of Evil-Merodach (Amil-Marduk) king of Babylon, 561—559 B.C.

In the following summary Table of Contents the reader should notice *first*, the distribution of the narrative between the two kingdoms of ISRAEL and JUDAH, and *secondly*, the prominence of narratives concerning the prophets.

- | | | | |
|----|------------------------------------|------------------------|--|
| A. | 1 Kings i—xi. | THE UNDIVIDED KINGDOM. | The last days of David and the reign of Solomon. |
| B. | xii. | THE SCHISM. | |
| C. | xiii. 1—xiv. 20. | ISRAEL. | Jeroboam and the Prophets. |
| D. | xiv. 21—xv. 24. | JUDAH. | From Rehoboam to Asa. |
| E. | xv. 25—xvi. 34. | ISRAEL. | From Nadab to Ahab. Assassinations and Insurrections. |
| F. | xvii. 1—xxii. 40. | ISRAEL. | Elijah and Ahab; Ahab, Syria, and the Prophets. |
| G. | xxii. 41—50. | JUDAH. | Jehoshaphat. |
| H. | 1 Kings xxii. 51—2 Kings viii. 15. | ISRAEL. | The last acts of Elijah; the acts of Elisha. Wars with Moab and Syria. |
| I. | viii. 16—29. | JUDAH. | Joram; Ahaziah. |
| J. | ix, x. | ISRAEL. | Jehu destroys the house of Ahab and puts down Baal-worship. |
| K. | xi, xii. | JUDAH. | (From a Temple Chronicle?) Athaliah overthrown by the high priest; the Temple repaired by Joash. |
| L. | xiii. | ISRAEL. | Jehoahaz; Joash; Syrian Wars, The last acts of Elisha. |
| M. | xiv. 1—22. | JUDAH. | Amaziah. |
| N. | 23—29. | ISRAEL. | The might of Jeroboam the son of Joash. |

- O. 1 Kings xv. 1—7. JUDAH. Azariah (Uzziah).
 P. 8—31. ISRAEL. Zechariah to Pekah. Assassinations and Insurrections.
 Q. 32—xvi. 20. JUDAH. Jotham; Ahaz.
 B. xvii. ISRAEL. Hoshca; the fall of the Kingdom.
 S. xviii—xxv. JUDAH. The last Kings: Hezekiah to Zedekiah.

A more detailed analysis gives the following result.

A. 1 Kings i—xi. THE UNDIVIDED KINGDOM.

- i. 1—4. David's old age.
 5—49. Adonijah's conspiracy defeated by Nathan the prophet.
 50—53. Adonijah submits to Solomon.
 ii. 1—11. David's testament and death.
 12—25. Adonijah put to death.
 26, 27. Abiathar deposed from the priesthood.
 28—35. Joab put to death.
 36—46. Shimei put to death.
 iii. 1—3. Solomon at the beginning of his reign.
 4—15 (cp. 2 Chron. i. 3—13). Solomon's prayer for wisdom.
 16—28. An illustration of Solomon's wisdom.
 iv. 1—20. Solomon's Officers.
 21—28. His greatness.
 29—34. His wisdom.
 v. 1—12 (= 2 Chron. ii. 3—16). His treaty with Hiram of Tyre.
 13—18 (cp. ix. 20—23; 2 Chron. ii. 17, 18). His workmen.
 vi. 1—13 (cp. 2 Chron. iii. 1—4). Solomon builds the Temple.
 14—38 (cp. 2 Chron. iii. 5—13). Description of the Temple and its ornaments.
 vii. 1—12. Solomon's other buildings.
 13—47 (cp. 2 Chron. iii. 17; iv. 2—18). The brasen pillars and the brasen vessels of the Temple.
 48—51 (cp. 2 Chron. iv. 19—v. 1). The golden vessels of the Temple.
 viii. 1—11 (cp. 2 Chron. v. 2—14). Dedication of the Temple.

- I Kings viii. 12—21 (cp. 2 Chron. vi. 1—11). Solomon's Thanksgiving.
- 22—53 (cp. 2 Chron. vi. 12—39). Solomon's Prayer of Consecration.
- 54—61. Solomon's Blessing.
- 62—66 (cp. 2 Chron. vii. 4—10). The final rejoicings.
- ix. 1—9 (cp. 2 Chron. vii. 11—22). Solomon's second vision.
- 10—14 (cp. 2 Chron. viii. 1, 2). The cities of the land of Cabul.
- 15—25 (cp. v. 13—18; 2 Chron. viii. 4—13). Solomon's cities; his levy; his three yearly feasts.
- 26—28 (= 2 Chron. viii. 17, 18). Voyages for gold.
- x. 1—13 (cp. 2 Chron. ix. 1—12). The visit of the queen of Sheba.
- 14—29 (cp. 2 Chron. ix. 13—18). The magnificence of Solomon.
- xi. 1—8. Solomon's many wives; his idolatry.
- 9—25. God's wrath; Solomon's adversaries.
- 26—43. The rise of Jeroboam; death of Solomon.
- B. xii. THE SCHISM.
- 1—20 (cp. 2 Chron. x. 1—19). Rehoboam's harsh answer to the Northern tribes; the tribes revolt.
- 21—24 (cp. 2 Chron. xi. 1—4). Shemaiah forbids civil war.
- 25—33. Jeroboam takes measures to break all intercourse between Israel and Judah.
- C. xiii. 1—xiv. 20. ISRAEL. Jeroboam and the Prophets.
- xiii. 1—10. A prophet from Judah prophesies against the altar at Beth-el.
- 11—32. The fate of the prophet from Judah.
- 33, 34. Jeroboam unmoved.
- xiv. 1—20. Abijah announces the death of the son of Jeroboam.
- D. xiv. 21—xv. 24. JUDAH.
- xiv. 21—31 (cp. 2 Chron. xi. 5—xii. 16). Rehoboam.
- xv. 1—8 (cp. 2 Chron. xiii. 1—xiv. 1). Abijah (Abijah).
- 9—24 (cp. 2 Chron. xiv. 2, 3; xv. 16—xvi. 6; 11—14). Asa.

E. 1 Kings xv. 25—xvi. 34. ISRAEL.

- xv. 25—32. Nadab.
 xv. 33—xvi. 7. Baasha.
 xvi. 8—14. Elah.
 15—20. Zimri.
 21—28. Omri. Foundation of Samaria.
 29—34. Ahab.

F. xvii. 1—xxii. 40. ISRAEL.

- xvii. 1—7. Elijah and the drought.
 8—24. The Widow of Zarephath.
 xviii. Elijah and the prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel.
 xix. The Flight of Elijah; the Call of Elisha.
 xx. 1—22. Ahab and the unnamed prophet; victory
 over the Syrians at Samaria.
 23—43. An unnamed king and an unnamed prophet;
 victory over the Syrians at Aphek.
 xxi. 1—16. Naboth and Ahab.
 17—29. Elijah and Ahab.
 xxii. 1—28 (cp. 2 Chron. xviii. 2—27). Micaiah and
 Ahab.
 29—40 (cp. 2 Chron. xviii. 28—34). The death of
 Ahab at Ramoth-gilead.

G. xxii. 41—50 (cp. 2 Chron. xx. 31—xxi. 1). JUDAH.
 Jehoshaphat.

II. 1 Kings xxii. 51—2 Kings viii. 15. ISRAEL.

- i. Kings xxii. 51—2 Kings i. 18. Ahaziah and Elijah.
 2 Kings ii. 1—18. The translation of Elijah.
 19—25. Two early miracles of Elisha.
 iii. Elisha and Jehoram; the Moabite war.
 iv. 1—7. Elisha's miracle of the oil.
 8—37. Elisha raises to life the son of the Shunammite.
 38—41. Heals the poisonous dish.
 42—44. Multiplies the loaves.
 v. 1—19. Heals Naaman of leprosy.
 20—27. Punishes Gehazi with leprosy.
 vi. 1—7. Recovers the lost axe-head.
 8—13. Leads captive a host of Syrians.
 vi. 27—vii. 2. Predicts plenty at the siege of Samaria.

- 2 Kings vii. 3—20. The prediction fulfilled.
- viii. 1—6. Elisha's miracles reported to the king of Israel.
- 7—15. Elisha at Damascus.
- I. 16—29. JUDAH.
- 16—24 (cp. 2 Chron. xxi: 5—10, 20). Joram (Jehoram).
- 25—29 (cp. 2 Chron. xxii. 1—6). Ahaziah.
- J. ix, x. ISRAEL.
- ix. 1—10. Elisha causes Jehu to be anointed king.
- 11—29 (cp. 2 Chron. xxii. 7—9). Jehu assassinates Joram and causes Ahaziah of Judah to be slain.
- 30—37. Jezebel murdered.
- x. 1—14 (cp. 2 Chron. xxii. 7—9). The sons of Ahab and the brethren of Ahaziah of Judah put to death.
- 15—28. Massacre of the worshippers of Baal.
- 29—31. Jehu maintains the calf-worship.
- 32—36. The Syrians begin to afflict Israel.
- K. xi, xii. JUDAH.
- xi. 1—3 (cp. 2 Chron. xxii. 10—11). Athaliah seizes the throne.
- 4—16 (cp. 2 Chron. xxiii. 1—15). Jehoiada the priest overthrows Athaliah, and makes Joash king.
- 17—20 (cp. 2 Chron. xxiii. 16—21). Jehoiada re-establishes the sole worship of JEHOVAH in Judah.
- xii. 1—3 (cp. 2 Chron. xxiv. 1, 2). The character of the reign of Jehoash (Joash).
- 4—16 (cp. 2 Chron. xxiv. 4—14). The king repairs the Temple.
- 17, 18 (cp. 2 Chron. xxiv. 23, 24). Jehoash surrenders the Temple treasure to the Syrians.
- 19—21 (cp. 2 Chron. xxiv. 25—27). Jehoash assassinated.
- L. xiii. ISRAEL.
- 1—9. Jehoahaz. The oppression of Israel by the Syrians.
- 10—13. Joash (Jehoash).

2 Kings xiii. 14—19. Elisha on his death-bed predicts victory over Syria.

20, 21. A miracle wrought by the bones of Elisha.

22—25. Victories of Joash over Syria.

M.

xiv. 1—22. JUDAH.

1—7 (cp. 2 Chron. xxv. 1—4, 11). Reign of Amaziah; his victory over Edom.

8—16 (cp. 2 Chron. xxv. 17—24). Amaziah defeated and Jerusalem captured by Jehoash of Israel.

17—22 (cp. 2 Chron. xxv. 25—xxvi. 2). Amaziah murdered; Azariah (Uzziah) made king.

N.

xiv. 23—29. ISRAEL. The might of Jeroboam the son of Joash.

O.

xv. 1—7 (cp. 2 Chron. xxvi. 3, 4; 21—23). JUDAH. Azariah (Uzziah).

P.

xv. 8—31. ISRAEL.

8—12. Zechariah assassinated by Shallum.

13—16. Shallum slain by Menahem.

17—22. Reign of Menahem.

23—26. Pekahiah assassinated by Pekah.

27—31. Reign of Pekah. First Assyrian Captivity.

Q.

xv. 32—xvi. 20. JUDAH.

xv. 32—38 (cp. 2 Chron. xxvii. 1—3; 7—9). Jotham.

xvi. 1—9 (cp. 2 Chron. xxviii. 1—5; 20, 21). Ahaz; submission to Assyria.

10—20 (cp. 2 Chron. xxviii. 22—24; 26, 27). Ahaz makes religious innovations; his death.

R.

xvii. ISRAEL.

1—6 (cp. xviii. 9—12). Reign of Hoshea. Second Assyrian Captivity.

7—23. The sins of Israel (and Judah).

24—41. The introduction of a mixed population and mixed worship into Samaria.

5. 2 Kings xviii—xxv. JUDAH.

- xviii. 1—8 (cp. 2 Chron. xxix. 1, 2). The prosperity of Hezekiah.
 9—12 (cp. xvii. 5, 6). Samaria led captive by the Assyrians.
 13—16. Hezekiah submits and pays tribute to Sennacherib.
 17—37 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 9—19). Sennacherib sends the rab-shakeh to terrify Jerusalem into surrender.
- xix. 1—7 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 20). Hezekiah and Isaiah.
 8—19. Hezekiah receives a threatening letter from Sennacherib, and prays over it in the Temple.
 20—34. Isaiah sends a comforting message to Hezekiah.
 35—37 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 21). The Assyrian army perishes; Sennacherib is assassinated.
- xx. 1—11 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 24). The sign given by Isaiah to Hezekiah in his sickness.
 12—21 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxii. 31). Isaiah rebukes Hezekiah for his reception of the ambassadors from Babylon.
- xxi. 1—18 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 1—10; 18—20). The reign of Manasseh. Destruction of Jerusalem threatened.
 19—26 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiii. 21—25). The reign of Amon.
- xxii. 1, 2 (= 2 Chron. xxxiv. 1, 2). The reign of Josiah.
 3—11 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 8—19). Repair of the Temple; the book of the law found.
 12—20 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 20—28). The king consults Huldah the prophetess.
- xxiii. 1—3 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 29—32). The public reading of the book of the law; the renewal of the Covenant.
 4—14 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3—5). Jerusalem and its neighbourhood cleansed from the symbols of idolatry.
 15—20 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxiv. 6, 7; 33). High places destroyed at Beth-el and in the cities of Samaria.

- 2 Kings xxiii. 21—23 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxv, 1—19). Josiah's great passover.
- 24—27. Nothing avails to avert the doom of Jerusalem.
- 28—30 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxv. 20—27). The death of Josiah at Megiddo.
- 31—35 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 1—4). Jehoahaz carried captive by Pharaoh-necoh.
- xxiii. 36—xxiv. 7 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 5—8). Jehoiakim.
- xxiv. 8—17 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 9, 10). Jehoiachin, First Chaldean Captivity.
- xxiv. 18—xxv. 7 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 11—13; Jer. xxxix. 1—7; lii. 1—11). Zedekiah the last king. Jerusalem taken by the Chaldeans.
- xxv. 8—12 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 19; Jer. xxxix. 8—10; lii. 12—16). Nebuzaradan's work of destruction and spoliation.
- 13—17 (cp. 2 Chron. xxxvi. 18; Jer. lii. 17—23). The brasen vessels carried off.
- 18—21 (cp. Jer. lii. 24—27). Execution of Jewish officers.
- 22—26 (cp. Jer. xl. 5—xli. 3; xlii. 5—7). Gedaliah appointed governor and presently murdered. The remnant of the Jews flee into Egypt.
- 27—30 (cp. Jer. lii. 31—34). Evil-merodach king of Babylon shews favour to the captive Jehoiachin.

§ 3. STRUCTURE AND SOURCES; DATE AND AUTHOR.

Appeal is made throughout the book of Kings to certain records as authorities containing fuller accounts of the reigns described. In the case of Solomon the record is called 'the book of the acts of Solomon' (LXX. βιβλίον ῥημάτων Σ., Vulgate, *liber uerborum dierum Salomonis*, 1 K. xi. 41). After the division of the Kingdom appeal is made for the kings of the Northern tribes to 'the book of the chronicles (lit. "acts of the days") of the kings of Israel' (LXX. βιβλίον λόγων τῶν ἡμερῶν τοῖς βασιλεῦσιν Ἰσραὴλ, Vulgate, *liber sermonum—uerborum—dierum*

regum Israel) while for the Southern reigns 'the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah' is cited¹.

A difference can be easily seen between the sections in which appeal is made to the chronicles and those in which no appeal is made. The former consist of brief notices written in the style of annals. Even important occurrences are only barely mentioned, and reflexions are brief, or absent altogether. These sections constitute the framework of the history. On the other hand, where no appeal is made to the chronicles, the sections are in many cases made up of narratives or groups of narratives, which are detailed and picturesque. (Compare, e.g. the annalistic section 1 K. xiv. 21—xvi. 34 with the group of picturesque narratives given in xvii. 1—xxii. 28, or again 2 K. xxiii. 31—xxv. 7 with xviii. 17—xix. 34.)

Further there are other sections, some of considerable length, others consisting of a verse or two only, which are written in the style of the book of Deuteronomy, and have the character rather of comment than of narrative. In some cases they shew clearly that they are written from the standpoint of the Deuteronomist; they condemn all worship which is not offered at the one chosen sanctuary (the temple at Jerusalem), even if it is offered to JEHOVAH. See, for example, 1 K. xv. 14; xxii. 43; 2 K. xvii. 7—23. To this class must be added such passages as 1 K. viii. 22 ff.; ix. 1—9, which are not pure narrative, which also in their present form shew traces of the influence of the language and teaching of Deuteronomy.

But different sections of Kings are distinguished not only by difference of style and of standpoint, but also by difference of statement. Such a passage as 1 K. ix. 15, 20—23 (note especially v. 22) differs considerably in statement from v. 13—16; and iv. 21—24 (the perfect quiet of Solomon's reign) differs similarly from xi. 14—40 (the adversaries whom Solomon had to contend with throughout his reign). Some passages again stand in a perplexing relation to one another, and yet no explanation is given; e.g. in 1 K. xix. 15—17 Elijah is

¹ No appeal is made in the case of Athaliah (queen), Jehoahaz, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah of Judah, nor in the case of Joram and Hoshea of Israel. These omissions were perhaps not without reason.

commissioned during the reign of Ahab to anoint Hazael and Jehu as kings over Syria and Israel, and to anoint Elisha as his own successor; in 2 K. viii. 7—15; ix. 1—3, however, it is Elisha at whose word Hazael seizes the crown in Syria, and Jehu is anointed in Israel, some fourteen years at least after Elijah received his commission. Nothing is said in explanation of the delay, or of the transference of the task from Elijah to Elisha.

It is obvious from these and similar facts that the book of Kings cannot have been composed *aus einem Guss*, 'at one casting¹,' to use the German phrase. The book is not of one quality throughout; earlier work has been adopted by a later author, and placed side by side with his own with little or no re-writing; similarly separate quotations from his authorities are placed in juxtaposition without the addition of clauses to explain the relation of one to another. Indications of 'Sources' obtrude themselves upon the reader's notice. Thus in 1 K. xxii. 41—50 the author after referring in *v.* 45 to the chronicles of the kings of Judah for 'the rest' of the acts of Jehoshaphat, gives a fresh quotation from the chronicles in *vv.* 46—49. In 2 K. xiii. the writer after giving an account of Jehoash (Joash) from the chronicles of the kings of Israel in *vv.* 10—13, including the king's death and burial, returns in *vv.* 14—19, 22—25 to give an account of Joash's visit to the death-bed of Elisha and his subsequent victories over Syria. In 2 K. xviii. 16, 17 the connexion between the two accounts is left unexplained; Hezekiah makes, as it seems, a full submission to the king of Assyria, and the king of Assyria sends a great host against Jerusalem. The sequence of the two events is left untold. Some scholars think that the order is inverted; others suppose that an interval of some years intervened between the event of *v.* 16 and that of *v.* 17. The uncertainty is due to the structure of the book; the author has made two extracts from his authorities, without stopping to supply the link which should bind them together.

We have then in Kings:

(1) Brief summaries of the reigns of all the kings forming the framework of the whole book. These were taken from 'the

¹ A metaphor taken from foundry-work.

chronicles of the kings of Israel' (or 'of Judah') by the compiler whom we may call 'the author' of Kings. A good instance of such a summary is 2 K. xv. 1, 2, 5—7.

(2) Full narratives of particular incidents of some reigns, particularly of those incidents which called forth prophetic activity. These are probably taken from Lives of the Prophets. Instances of such narratives are found in 1 K. xiii. 1—32; xiv. 1—18; xviii. 1—46.

(3) Passages written in the style of the book of Deuteronomy, and from the standpoint of the Deuteronomist. Of these some pass judgement on the conduct of the kings, chiefly as regards worship. Others trace a connexion between the sins of the people and the calamities which beset them. Others again record at length matters regarding the worship of the Temple. Such a passage is 1 K. viii. 23—53 in which Solomon's prayer at the Dedication of the Temple is given in a form in which (it is clear) it has been influenced by the language and thought of Deuteronomy. These passages appear to come from the compiler, who drew up the brief summaries mentioned above.

DATE AND AUTHOR. Indications are not wanting as to the date at which the various extracts from early documents were put together, and the compiler completed this mosaic-work by adding passages which he had either written or re-written himself. The brief notices drawn from the chronicles of the kings of Israel and of Judah, which form the compiler's framework for the book, come down as far as the reign of Zedekiah, the last king, and there cease. The last event recorded is the advancement of Jehoiachin, Zedekiah's nephew and predecessor, after an imprisonment of thirty-seven years in Babylon. This event happened in 561 B.C. The *terminus a quo* is indicated fairly well by this year. Kings cannot have been compiled before circ. 561 B.C.

But on the other hand it is improbable that the book was compiled any long time after 561 B.C. The compiler stands in a definite relation to the book of Deuteronomy. Now Deuteronomy was published in the eighteenth year of Josiah (=621 B.C.). The event made a deep impression, and for some

years to come this book was the Law for the party in Judah which was faithful to JEHOVAH. The compiler of Kings writes as one who is still moved by the religious impulse given by the book of Deuteronomy. When he refers to 'the Law' or 'the Law of Moses' it is generally clear that his reference is to Deuteronomy, and not to the Pentateuch in general¹. Moreover the language of Kings is coloured by the language of Deuteronomy². The *terminus ad quem* is to be sought for not much later than 561 B.C., for towards the end of the exile a fresh movement (inaugurated perhaps by Ezekiel) began, which issued in the writing and publication of the Priestly Code, by which the special legislation of Deuteronomy was thrown into the background. The compiler of Kings probably lived not later than the second half of the sixth century B.C.

A Talmudic tradition (Baba Bathra 15 a) says, 'Jeremiah wrote his own book and the book of Kings (*Melachim*) and Lamentations (*Kinöth*).' But the tradition is post-Christian, i.e. it is more than 600 years later than the life-time of Jeremiah, and the internal evidence in its favour when carefully examined turns out to be almost insignificant. The coincidences of language between Kings and Jeremiah, though interesting³, are quite insufficient to prove that Jeremiah the prophet wrote both books. Even the fact that the historical passage, 2 K. xxiv. 18—xxv. 21, is practically identical with Jer. lii. 1—27 does not prove that the two books are both due to Jeremiah, for it is very improbable that the historical sections of the book of Jeremiah were written by the prophet himself⁴. Jeremiah began to prophesy in 626 B.C., and was probably dead by 561 B.C.

It is necessary therefore to conclude that the author of the book of Kings is unknown. He wrote in captivity, not in

¹ Cp. 1 K. ii. 3, 4 (Deut. xi. 1); vi. 11—13 (Deut. viii. 6); ix. 3 (Deut. xii. 5); 2 K. xiv. 6 (Deut. xxiv. 16).

² See notes on 1 K. ii. 2—4; viii. 22—53; 2 K. xvii. 7—23; and cp. Driver, *Literature of the Old Testament*, ed. vii, pp. 200, 201.

³ See Driver, *Literature of the Old Testament*, ed. vii, page 203.

⁴ Cp. the similar case of the practical identity of 2 K. xviii. 13, 17—xx. 19 with Isa. xxxvi. 1—xxxviii. 8; 21, 22; xxxix. 1—8.

his own land, if, that is, we may attribute to him the notice in 1 K. iv. 24 (v. 4, Heb.) that Solomon 'had dominion over all the region *beyond the River*' (R.V. marg.) i.e. over all the country west of the Euphrates. But finally it must be said that it is not improbable that a few additions (e.g. 1 K. xiv. 1—20) were made to the text and some re-arrangement of the text was effected after the author (compiler) had completed his work. See § 4.

§ 4. TWO RECENSIONS OF THE TEXT.

A comparison of the Septuagint with the Hebrew text of 1 Kings seems to suggest that the first half of the book of Kings was subjected to some further editorial revision after the days of the compiler or author. LXX. as represented by its earliest MS., the Codex Vaticanus, presents a text which differs a good deal, chiefly in arrangement, from our present Hebrew text. After 1 K. ii. 35 (Heb. and E. V.) LXX. has fourteen additional verses, and after v. 46*a* eleven additional verses. These passages do not contain any matter not found in some part or other of the Hebrew text, but the grouping of the verses and their position in ch. ii. is peculiar to LXX. In LXX. again iii. 1 is missing from its place according to the Hebrew, being found in company with ix. 16 immediately before v. 7. After v. 16 (30 Heb.) LXX. presents the following arrangement of the text :

v. 18¹ and they prepared the stones and the timber *three years* (Heb., to build the house).

vi. 1. And it came to pass in the four hundred and *fortieth* (Heb., eightieth) year of the Exodus of the children of Israel from Egypt, in the fourth year...in the second month of Solomon's reign over Israel...

v. 17. ...that they took (*καὶ αἰπόρω*) great costly stones for the foundation of the house and *unhewn* (Heb., wrought) stone; 18*a*. and the *sons* (Heb., builders) of Solomon and the *sons* (Heb., builders) of Hiram hewed them, *and laid them* (Heb., and the Gebalites).

vi. 37. In the fourth year he founded the house of the

¹ The numbering of chapter and verse is according to the Hebrew.

LORD, in the month *Nisan* (Heb., *Ziv*) and (or even) in the second month. (Heb. omits these words).

38 In the eleventh year in the month *Baad* (Heb., *Bul*)—this is the eighth month—the house was finished.

The account is then continued with vi. 2.

Ch. vii. 1—12 appears in LXX. at the close of ch. vii., and viii. 12, 13 after viii. 53. After xii. 24 LXX. has twenty-three additional verses which coincide with parts of ch. xi. and of xiv. 1—3, and give an account of Jeroboam and of the revolt of the Ten Tribes. On the other hand in LXX. there is no mention of Jeroboam in ch. xii. until v. 15, and xiv. 1—20 is wanting. After 1 K. xvi. 28 there are in LXX. nine additional verses, taken from xxii. 42—44, 46—51 (Heb.) with slight variations. On the other hand in ch. xxii. vv. 46—49 are wanting. Lastly chs. xx., xxi. are transposed in LXX. so that the account of the acts of Elijah in xvii.—xix., xxi. is continuous, and the account of the Syrian wars xx., xxii. is uninterrupted.

These differences are certainly striking. Some of them indeed seem to be due to the fact that the Greek translators in the course of their work felt themselves at liberty to rearrange the text which lay before them. Others however testify, it seems, to the existence of a Hebrew text which differed from the Massoretic recension. Thus the occurrence of 1 K. xxii. 42—51 (or the equivalent) in two places in the LXX. text suggests that the older Hebrew MSS. varied as to the place assigned to this passage, and that the transcribers 'harmonised' their authorities by giving the passage in both places. Of this LXX. text it cannot be said that it is better as a whole than its rival, for it shews traces of similar corruption, but some knowledge of it is necessary for a thorough study of Kings. It is indeed probable that LXX. preserves a few readings which are superior to the Massoretic.

§ 5. CHRONOLOGY.

For the purposes of chronology the history of the Kings falls into four periods. The first reaches to the death of Solomon; the second extends from the Disruption to the Accession of Jehu; the third from Jehu to the Fall of Samaria; the fourth embraces the hundred and thirty years during which the Jewish kingdom survived its sister kingdom.

The Hebrews possessed no era from which to number years and so date all events by reference to one standard. It is true that in 1 K. vi. 1 the foundation of Solomon's Temple is assigned to the year 480 of the Exodus from Egypt. If the accessions of kings and other great events had been dated in the same way, there would have been an 'era of the Exodus,' and a real scheme of chronology for the book of Kings would have been supplied by the author of the book. But it is not so. No other event is dated by a reference to the Exodus. Even in 1 K. vi. 1 we do not seem to have a 'date' in our sense of the word, but only a very rough indication of the passage of time. 480 years represent most probably twelve 'generations' of 40 years each.

The Hebrew historian therefore having no era, gives his 'dates' in the two remaining periods by the use of internal synchronisms. From the time of the Disruption two dynasties were reigning in the land of Israel, and it became possible to construct a system of comparative dates. Rehoboam and Jeroboam became kings probably within a few months of one another, but Rehoboam predeceased his rival, and the author of Kings accordingly dates the accession of Rehoboam's two successors by the regnal years of Jeroboam. Thus Abijam succeeded to the throne of Judah in the 18th year of Jeroboam (1 K. xv. 1), and Asa in the 20th year of the Israelite king (v. 9). Jeroboam predeceased Asa, and accordingly the accession of Jeroboam's successor in Israel is dated in turn by the regnal year of the king of Judah. And so the cumbrous system is continued. Accessions of kings of Judah are dated by the regnal years of kings of Israel, and accessions of kings of Israel by the regnal years of kings of Judah. It is a system which readily lends itself to confusion and mistake. From

2 K. xxi. 1 onward, owing to the destruction of the Northern kingdom, the system breaks down.

For the second period however these synchronisms seem to yield a settled result. From the disruption to the accession of Jehu the two sets of statements of the editor of Kings regarding the two kingdoms are, broadly speaking, in agreement with one another. If we add together the years ascribed to the kings of Judah from Rehoboam to Ahaziah inclusive, the total reaches 95 years. If we add together in like manner the years of the contemporary kings of Israel, the total reaches 98 years. The small discrepancy of *three* years may be removed altogether (1) if we assume that the editor regarded Jeroboam as having commenced his reign over Israel 'a year' before Rehoboam began his reign of seventeen years 'in Jerusalem' (1 K. xiv. 21); (2) if we subtract *two* years from the Israelite total, on the ground that, as there were eight Israelite kings to six Jewish, the inclusive reckoning of years comes twice oftener into the Israelite total than into the Jewish. Thus the chronological scheme for this period is sufficiently consistent with itself to offer no definite ground for suspecting the accuracy of the reckoning that 95 or 96 years elapsed between the Disruption of the kingdom and the fall of the house of Ahab. One source of doubt however remains; there may have been co-regencies or a co-regency during this period. If so the apparent agreement of the additions loses the value attributed to it.

For the third period however the synchronisms are often uncertain, and towards the end of the period full of difficulty. Unlike those of the second period, they do not pass the test of addition. The regnal years of the sovereigns of Judah, from Athaliah to the sixth year of Hezekiah, added together reach the total of 165. The years assigned to the kings of Israel for the same period, i.e. from Jehu to the ninth year of Hoshea (2 K. xviii. 10), amount to 143 years 7 months. If this discrepancy were the only difficulty, we might accept the hypothesis which has been put forward that for a period, or periods, extending over 21 years, anarchy existed in the Northern kingdom. There is however no direct evidence in favour of such a hypothesis, and it is to be rejected in view of the fact that other difficulties are to be found in the

chronological statements which belong to this period. See the notes on 2 K. xiii. 10; xv. 1, 8; xvii. 1.

In the face of these difficulties it is impossible to construct a system of chronology for the book of Kings based solely upon the statements of the book itself. The majority of these statements may be correct, but as long as we confine our attention to these alone, we do not know when we are standing on firm ground. It is necessary to seek for chronological evidence outside the Old Testament.

The first piece of such evidence is afforded by the mention of the Egyptian king Shishak (Sheshonk I) in 1 K. xi. 40 as contemporary with Solomon, and in xiv. 25 as contemporary with Rehoboam. Sheshonk I became king in 952 B.C. ('earliest possible date,' Flinders Petrie) or 'about 945 B.C.' (Breasted). His reign lasted till 'about 920 B.C.' (Breasted; similarly Flinders Petrie). We may therefore say with some confidence that the year 950 B.C. fell within the reign of Solomon.

For a later period more definite as well as more frequent help is given by the Assyrian monuments. The Assyrians had officers annually appointed like the Roman consuls, who gave their names to the years for which they were chosen. A long list of years thus named, called the *Eponym Canon*, is preserved, and one of the various entries made in the margin, the notice of an eclipse of the sun, enables us to turn the whole list into years B.C. From Assyrian sources we derive the following dates:

854 B.C. Ahab fights against the Assyrians at the battle of Karkar (not mentioned in the Old Testament).

842 B.C. Jehu pays tribute to Assyria.

[763 B.C. Eclipse of the sun.]

738 B.C. Menahem pays tribute to Assyria.

733 B.C. Rezin besieged by the Assyrians in Damascus.

722 B.C. Samaria conquered by the Assyrians.

701 B.C. Sennacherib compels Hezekiah to pay tribute¹.

681—668 B.C. Reign of Esar-haddon.

¹ For the chronology of the events narrated in 2 K. xviii. 17 ff. see the notes on xviii. 13 ff.

To these dates we may add from other sources:

606 B.C. Fall of Nineveh and end of the Assyrian empire.

586 B.C. (= 19th year of Nebuchadrezzar). Fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the Temple.

In general it may be said that where there is a conflict between Assyrian and Hebrew evidence as to a date, the former is to be preferred (*a*) because the Biblical dates frequently differ among themselves, (*b*) because the Assyrians had (and the Hebrews had not) a system of chronology.

§ 6. THE RELATION OF KINGS TO CHRONICLES¹.

In comparing Kings and Chronicles it is necessary to remember that there is little doubt that Chronicles, as it stands now in the English Bible (and also in the Hebrew), is not complete. It has been artificially separated from Ezra², as Ezra has been artificially separated from Nehemiah. Thus the original book of Chronicles extended from 1 Chr. i. 1 to Neh. xiii. 31, and included the book of Ezra-Nehemiah. Cp. CHRONICLES (Cambridge Bible), *Introduction*, § 2.

Kings is the older work, as a comparison of the respective conclusions of the two works suggests. Kings stops short at 562-1 B.C., Chronicles continues the narrative as far as the second visit of Nehemiah to Jerusalem (432 B.C.), and in the genealogy of the high priests as far as Jaddua (Neh. xii. 11), the contemporary of Alexander the Great (circ. 330 B.C.). Of the whole work however which consists of Chronicles-Ezra-Nehemiah, only 2 Chronicles is parallel with 1, 2 Kings. In these parallel works the history is carried from the beginning of the reign of Solomon to the destruction of the Temple by the Chaldeans. Where the same events are narrated Chronicles is dependent on Kings³. This fact is remarkably illustrated by the correspond-

¹ The two texts are given in a form convenient for comparison in the *Parallel History of the Jewish Monarchy* printed in the text of the Revised Version, 1885, arranged by R. Somervell, M.A., London, 1896-7 [two parts].

² Cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 22, 23 with Ezra i. 1-3 a.

³ It is probable that the Chronicler followed occasionally some other authority. Cp. CHRONICLES (Cambridge Bible), *Introduction*, § 5.

ence between the two great sections (1 K. iii. 4—xii. 24 and 2 Chr. i. 6—xi. 4) which contain the account of Solomon and of the beginning of the reign of Rehoboam. Here we find a change of order (2 Chr. i. 14—17), one or two (not lengthy) insertions (2 Chr. vi. 40—vii. 3; viii. 13—15), and a few revisional touches (e.g. in 2 Chr. viii. 2), but the dependence on Kings is clear. Further, the text of Chronicles is marked by some very important omissions of passages contained in Kings, e.g. 1 K. iii. 16—28 (the judgement of Solomon); iv. 1—19 (the organisation of the kingdom); vii. 1—12 (the building of Solomon's palace); viii. 50 b—61 (part of Solomon's prayer and blessing); xi. 1—40 (Solomon's wives, his apostasy, and his adversaries). These omissions, being plainly intentional, taken as a whole serve to indicate the differences of character and purpose which distinguish Kings from Chronicles. It appears that the Chronicler cared little for the political side of things; his interest lay mainly in religion, or rather in one aspect of religion, namely, in worship. Both he and the compiler of Kings make many references to the Book of the Law, but whereas in Kings the appeal is made to Deuteronomy or to the pre-Deuteronomic (the "Prophetic") stratum of the Pentateuch, in Chronicles the reference is to the Priestly Code, the latest stratum of the Pentateuch, in which the most detailed directions for worship are given. A comparison of two passages by way of illustration is instructive.

1 K. ix. 25.

And three times in a year
did Solomon offer
burnt offerings [and peace offer-
ings]
upon the altar
which he built *unto the LORD*

2 Chr. viii. 12, 13.

Then Solomon offered
burnt offerings [unto the LORD]
on the altar [of the LORD]
which he had built *before the
porch*
[even as the duty of every day
required,...
on the sabbaths,
and on the new moons,
and on the set feasts,]
three times in the year

1 K. ix. 25.

2 Chr. viii. 12, 13.

[burning incense therewith]
upon the altar that was before
the LORD.

even in the feast of unleavened
bread,
and in the feast of weeks,
and in the feast of tabernacles.

The passage of Chronicles goes on to tell that Solomon, carrying out the arrangements of David, appointed the courses of Priests, of Levites, and of doorkeepers to their several duties.

Here we see that the Chronicler, who abridges his predecessor's work when it deals with politics, expands it when it deals with worship. He supplements accordingly the text of Kings, which seemed to him to be incomplete. But we may doubt whether he is right in attributing the practice of the developed worship of his own day to Solomon.

On the other hand the omissions made by the Chronicler from the text of Kings, which have been already referred to, are of more than liturgical significance. The author's interest in worship, worship centred in the Temple of Jerusalem, has made him less than just to the religion of the Northern kingdom. Though he transcribes from 1 K. xii. 24 JEHOVAH'S sentence on the Disruption of Solomon's kingdom, *This thing is of me*, he treats Israel throughout the history as in rebellion against JEHOVAH by virtue of its rebellion against the house of David (2 Chr. xiii. 8). The Northern kingdom is for the Chronicler cut off from the religious history of Israel. He tells us nothing of Elijah, nothing of Elisha¹. In Kings twenty-five chapters (1 K. xii. 25—2 K. xv. 31) are mainly occupied with the history of the North, with special reference to its religious aspect as illustrated in the lives of Elijah and Elisha. In Chronicles there are only four chapters which supply a parallel narrative in this section, namely, 2 Chr. xviii.; xxii. 10—xxiv. 12; xxv. 1—4, 11, 17—xxvi. 2; and of these only the first (the

¹ An obscure allusion to a 'writing of Elijah' addressed to Jehoram, king of Judah (2 Chr. xxi. 12) is no real exception.

death of Ahab at Ramoth-gilead) may be called an 'Israelitish' chapter.

The motto of the Chronicler might well have been 'Religion is of the Jews,' i.e. not of their brethren of Israel. The compiler of Kings worked with less narrow limitations. He incorporates religious narratives in which the Temple of Jerusalem has no place. Of his three great prophets, Elijah, Elisha, and Isaiah, two belonged to the Northern kingdom. In his narrative JEHOVAH the God of all Israel delivers Samaria from the Syrians no less than Jerusalem from Sennacherib. The compiler of Kings held indeed the Deuteronomic view that worship performed outside Jerusalem was irregular, but this did not prevent him from devoting half his work to the story of JEHOVAH'S providence over the separated kingdom of Israel. The Chronicler fixes his gaze upon the narrow fold of the Jewish Church, the writer of Kings, though an orthodox Judæan, has been led by a broader sympathy to record the fortunes of both sections of the flock which made up the ancient people of God.

§ 7. CHARACTER AND PURPOSE.

At the present day the spheres of History and of Story are as widely sundered as the poles. This, however, is a condition which is due to influences which are comparatively modern. In the ancient world History and Story were twin sisters, who (to continue the metaphor) lived in one house. The ancient historians combined the careful narrative of events of their own and recent time with a number of stories of earlier days, of the truth of which they had no means of judging. These stories are of varying historical value. Some of them, though not literally true, seem to embody important tribal traditions regarding the relationships and migrations of the respective tribes in very early days. If these stories are not true in their superficial sense, they are historically valuable when they are properly understood. Of such stories added to narratives of direct historical value the Annals of the Greeks and Romans consist; it would be strange, if the Hebrew Annals were composed on a plan altogether different.

Now it is clear that there are diverse elements in Kings.

(Cp. § 3, STRUCTURE AND SOURCES.) There are on the one hand many sections which seem to be extracts from state records, and so to be of direct historical value. On the other hand there are narratives which seem rather to be of the nature of parables or of sermons in story-form. See e.g. 1 K. xiii. 1—32 (the Disobedient Prophet); xiv. 1—18 (the Death of the Son of Jeroboam); 2 K. ii. 23 f. (the Mocking Children); xiii. 20 f. (the Bones of Elisha). It becomes necessary to ask, must we accept these stories as literally true because they are found in the Annals of Israel, though we should doubt them or reject them if we found them in the Annals of Greece or Rome? Must we either accept the whole book of Kings as historical, or reject it, as unworthy to be a medium of Divine revelation, because some parts of it are not history?

From any such dilemma we are delivered by nothing less authoritative than the example and practice of our Lord Himself. Story is not an unworthy medium for a Divine message, for Christ made use of this very medium in His parables. He did not merely tolerate the use of tale in teaching; he sanctioned it fully by His own regular practice. We dare not then refuse to find in the Annals of Israel, and in particular in the book of Kings, the same two elements which are found in other early Annals. We have on the one side a historical narrative, and on the other, supplementing it, a number of stories, the historical value of which lies open to serious dispute. Each of these elements has its own particular value. The main facts of the history convey the lesson of God's providence over the nations. The stories contained in the book vary the lesson, and apply it to individuals. Thus in the story which tells how the young man saw chariots of fire surrounding the prophet (2 K. vi. 13—15), there is an allegory which expresses with unsurpassed force the truth of God's presence with his servants. This story has been of religious value in many ages by helping men in difficulty to realise the nearness of Divine help, for truth thus vividly expressed receives fresh power to prevail with men. But the proof of the truth of God's overruling guidance is not in the isolated allegory, but in the general course of the history which the book of Kings relates.

It must not be forgotten that Kings is not primarily a book of political history. It is not written with the main object of recording the 'acts' and the 'might' of each king in succession. For such matters the reader is systematically referred to the State Chronicles of Israel and Judah. Kings is a book of *Prophets and Kings*, the Prophets holding the first place. The title of the book as given in some MSS. of the Peshitta¹ is,

'The book of the kings who were in that ancient people. In which book are written the stories of the prophets, who were in those times in their generations.'

Kings by virtue of its contents belongs as much to the Prophetical Books as to the Historical. It is not a continuous chronicle; it is a book of prophetic teaching, in which sometimes history, sometimes story, is employed as the vehicle of the teaching.

It may, however, be objected that Kings contains some narratives and some stories which are not edifying for Christians. This contention is true, and the fact only to be expected. If in the Pentateuch our Lord found some things written because of the hardness of men's hearts (Matt. xix. 8), we cannot be surprised, if such things are found in the Historical books also. Not all the teaching which was suitable for the Jews of the sixth century B.C. is suited for the Church of to-day. From our Christian vantage ground we may criticize deeds of Elijah and Elisha, even deeds done in their prophetic character, and we may condemn any attempt to treat such deeds as affording even to the slightest degree guidance for Christian practice. But when all has been said, it must be confessed that the criticisms to which the book of Kings lies open are criticisms of detail; the principle which guides the writer cannot be assailed.

This principle is that God works in history. Free will is indeed given to men, but the Divine Providence overrules their actions, be they good, or be they evil. Even in the course of a dark chronicle of bloodshed and wrong the writer does not forget that God is the true ruler of the world. The two adversaries of Solomon, Hadad of Edom, and Rezon of Damascus, are raised up against the king by God (1 K. xi. 14,

¹ e.g. in the Buchanan Bible in Camb. Univ. Library.

23). The disruption of the kingdom is of God (1 K. xii. 24). But not only afflictions, but deliverances also come by Divine Providence. When Abab is besieged by the Syrians in Samaria it is JEHOVAH who delivers the enemy into the hand of the king (1 K. xx. 13 f.). In an equally severe crisis nearly a hundred years later the God of Israel used the prowess of Jeroboam II, who 'did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD' (2 K. xiv. 24—27), to save Israel from destruction. By mercy and by judgement, by encouragement and by warning, JEHOVAH manifested Himself in the history of His people. He shewed Himself to be a 'jealous' God, i.e. One whose 'zeal' (2 K. xix. 31) punishes the wicked and performs great acts on behalf of the oppressed. The history given in Kings is indeed to a large extent 'secular' history of battles and revolutions, but God is shewn to be at work even in the midst of such events as these, using sometimes a good king and sometimes an evil king to carry out His purposes. The fundamental lesson of the book is that not even in its most desperate convulsions does the world break away from the control of its Supreme Governor. This is a lesson of faith needed for all times, when good and evil mingle in desperate strife.

Some special lessons drawn in the New Testament from the book of Kings must be mentioned here. Our Lord refers to the Queen of Sheba's visit to Solomon (1 K. x. 1 ff.) in order to shew that heathens by their greater zeal sometimes put Israel to shame (Matt. xii. 42). He cites the stories of Elijah at Zarephath (1 K. xvii. 9 ff.) and of Elisha and Naaman (2 K. v. 1 ff.) to shew that the Divine charity reaches beyond the limits of the Chosen People (Luke iv. 25—27). St James (v. 17, 18) illustrates the power of prayer from Elijah's prayer for rain (1 K. xviii. 42 ff.). St Paul (Rom. xi. 2 ff.) confirms himself in the belief that a righteous remnant remains from the unbelieving Israel of his day by recalling the Divine reassurance given to Elijah in 1 K. xix. 18. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi. 35) seems to have the widow of Zarephath and the Shunamite woman in mind when in illustrating the power of faith he says that by faith *women received their dead by a resurrection*. The nature of the Contents (cp. § 2) and the structure of the

book (cp. § 3) both serve to indicate the Purpose of the book and to confirm what has already been said in this section. Kings is not a history, but only a series of cameos from history interspersed with material of a different kind. Thus it cannot be said that any sustained attempt is made to narrate the events of Solomon's reign, though ten chapters are devoted to it. From the division of the kingdom to the Fall of the Northern kingdom more space is given to Israel than to Judah, but it cannot be said that the story of Israel is consecutively or systematically told. Politically the reign of Omri must have been of great importance, but it is briefly dismissed in a few verses. The triumphs of Jeroboam the son of Joash (2 K. xiv. 25) must have made some stir in Syria, but they are barely recorded. The play of the politics of Western Asia in which Pekah took part (2 K. xvi. 5 ff.) would have filled an interesting chapter of history, but it is not written in the book of Kings. Similar remarks may be made concerning the story of Judah when, after the Fall of Israel, the narrative of the Southern kingdom is taken up more fully. It becomes clear indeed that it is not the kingdom, whether of the North or of the South, with which the book of Kings is mainly concerned. It is the leaders of religion whether prophets of the North like Elijah and Elisha, or men of the South like Isaiah the prophet or Josiah the king, who claim the largest space. A considerable part of the history of Israel and Judah is told by the way, but the main Purpose of the book is to convey and to enforce religious lessons, taught by the Prophets or written in the book of Deuteronomy.

Among these lessons stands first the lesson of the necessity of Faithfulness to the One God (1 K. ii. 1—4; xviii. 21 ff.), JEHOVAH, who is specially the God of Israel (2 K. v. 15; xviii. 5), but also God of all the Earth (2 K. xix. 15). This faithfulness can be best preserved, the author teaches, by faithfulness to the one Sanctuary, the Temple built by Divine Purpose at Jerusalem (1 K. v. 5; xii. 28—30; xiv. 23; xv. 14; *al.*). JEHOVAH carries on a moral government of the world, punishing the wicked (1 K. xi. 9, 14, 23; xxi. 17 ff.) without respect of persons, and refusing to deal superficially with deep

seated evil (2 K. xxiii. 25 ff.). The uselessness of trying to evade His decree is illustrated in 1 K. xxii. 30 ff. At the same time repentance avails with Him; it may shorten the period of punishment (1 K. viii. 33, 34) or postpone the infliction to a later generation (xxi. 27 ff.). JEHOVAH is merciful both to Israel and to Gentiles (1 K. xvii. 8—24; 2 K. v. 1—19; vi. 21—23; xiv. 6, 26, 27). Stern as the tone of the book sometimes is, it does suggest the tenderness of God. His care for those who love Him is unfailing; He feeds Elijah in his flight (1 K. xvii. 1—15; xix. 1—8); gives Elisha assurance of protection in the vision of the chariots of fire (2 K. vi. 17); and hears the prayer of Hezekiah in his sickness (xx. 1—11). JEHOVAH is the giver of all good things, of mental endowments as well as of material benefits, of Solomon's wisdom and not only of Solomon's wealth (1 K. iii. 5—15). With regard to religious observances it may be said that the value of sacrifice is assumed (1 K. viii. 62, 63), but the value of prayer is enforced (ix. 3—5; xvii. 19—22; 2 K. iv. 33—35; xiii. 4; xix. 4, 15—19). Further it may be said that the germ of sacramental teaching is to be found in the book of Kings. Naaman is healed by the use of the water of Jordan (2 K. v. 10—14). No magical power is attributed to the water, but to wash in Jordan is the Divinely appointed means of recovery, and the bathing is an effectual sign of the cleansing which accompanied it. Naaman learnt to know the God of Israel through an act of faith and obedience.

To conclude. Kings is no mere transcript from the Annals of Israel and Judah; it is a noble religious book. It enforces the principle that 'God is the controlling power and sin the disturbing force in the entire history of men and nations!'

§ 8. THE HEBREW TEXT AND THE VERSIONS.

The book of Kings cannot be adequately studied without some reference to the original Hebrew and to the early versions. It is true that the English Authorised Version is as a whole a faithful and literal translation. On the other hand there are many places in which the Hebrew text itself, from which the

¹ F. W. Farrar.

A.V. was made, has suffered injury in the course of transcription. The possibility of such injury is not precluded by the fact that the text has been carefully guarded from the time of the Massoretes¹ down to our own day. The work of these Jewish scholars began after much mischief had been done, but it was useful in arresting further deterioration of the text. The Massoretes laid down detailed rules for copying the Scriptures, they recorded each small peculiarity of spelling, they reckoned the number of verses in each book of the Old Testament. A further proof of their carefulness lies in their treatment of various readings. Where there are two readings neither is excluded. The reading accepted for use in the Synagogue (called the *Kērr*, 'read') is furnished with vowel points, which are allowed to stand in the text, while the consonants stand in the margin. On the other hand the reading not so accepted (called the *Kēthib*, 'written') is allowed to stand in the text, but it receives no vowel points indicating how it should be read.

Yet another proof of the care bestowed on the Hebrew text after the beginning of the Christian era may be derived from the elaborate system of vowel points which is found in the Old Testament. The Hebrew letters are all consonants, and in the ancient language words as different as *dābār*, 'a word,' *deber*, 'a pestilence,' *dibbār*, 'he spake,' *dabbār*, 'speak thou,' were all expressed by the simple letters DBR, and only the context shewed which of these four words was intended. The Old Testament was written originally thus, but at some date later than the time of St Jerome (†420 A.D.) vowel points were added to the consonantal text, the exact pronunciation of every word was indicated, and the ambiguity referred to was removed.

From all that has been said, it may be gathered that the scrupulous care notoriously bestowed on the Hebrew text belongs not to the days when the books were composed, but to later times. The care of the Massoretes did not become

¹ The Massoretes ('transmitters' from *māsar*, 'transmit') were the Jewish scholars who undertook the copying of the Scriptures. They were the successors of the Scribes. Their activity seems to have extended over centuries. It began in the early centuries of the Christian era.

generally effective in preserving the text until two or three centuries or more after the beginning of the Christian era. In the second century of our era Jewish scholars utter warnings against 'incorrect copies,' i.e. copies which differed from the text adopted at that time as the standard. It seems that variations were in existence of more importance than those which are found in the margin of Hebrew Bibles to-day. It is therefore necessary in many cases to go behind the text of printed Hebrew Bibles, the Massoretic text as it is called, and to enquire what was the original reading of the Hebrew.

A study of the Greek version, the SEPTUAGINT (LXX.) confirms us in this course. In many passages it appears that the translators, working in the third and second centuries B.C., had before them a Hebrew text different from that of the Massorettes. This text approves itself in many cases as superior to its rival. LXX. exists in more than one form. The earliest and (in general) the best is that found in the Vatican MS. of the fourth century of our era (B). It forms the basis of Dr Swete's edition. A second form, which has been assimilated to the common Hebrew text, is found in the codex Alexandrinus of the fifth century (A). Its readings are cited in Dr Swete's margin. A third form, preserved in a group of cursive MSS., is named after Lucian of Antioch (martyred 311 or 312 A.D.). It has been published (as far as the book of Esther) by P. de Lagarde (Gottingae, 1883).

LXX. is important not only as a witness to an earlier form of the text of the Hebrew Bible, but also as an interpreter of the Old Testament. It is the earliest of all translations of the Bible, it was made in an eastern land (Egypt), and its authors worked before Jerusalem was destroyed and the thread of early tradition weakened. Moreover LXX. was the form in which most of the writers of the New Testament were acquainted with the Old; it was indeed their Bible, as it was the Bible of the earliest Fathers of the Church.

The Syriac version, the PESHITTA, is valuable from the fact that it was made by translators, Jews by birth or by religion, who used a language kindred to Hebrew. They were able to escape some errors of translation found in LXX. This version,

though younger than LXX., belongs to an early date; it was looked upon as old in the days of Ephrem the Syrian (†373 A.D.). 'Syriac' is the form of Aramaic (see next paragraph), used by Christian writers.

Another valuable help to the interpretation of the books of Kings is the TARGUM, a translation made into Aramaic. Aramaic, properly the language of Aram, i.e. Syria, was spoken over the greater part of Western Asia as far east as Babylon, and in the commercial cities of Egypt as far south as Assuan. Four passages of the Old Testament (Ezra iv. 8—vi. 18; vii. 12—26; Jer. x. 11; Dan. ii. 4—vii. 28) are written in Aramaic. It was the language of diplomacy (2 K. xviii. 26) and of commerce, and it is probable that the Jews in Babylon, in Mesopotamia, and in parts of Syria understood it better than their own sacred tongue. In our Lord's time it was spoken in Palestine; and some of our Lord's own words are recorded in Aramaic; *Tálitha cūm* (*cumi*; Mark v. 41); *Ephphatha* (Mark vii. 34); *Sabachthani* (Matt. xxvii. 46). The Targum existed originally in an oral form; it is based on certain traditional glosses recited in the Synagogue by the Methurgeman (Interpreter) when the lesson was read. The work of compilation was perhaps finished in the fifth century of our era.

The Latin VULGATE made (391—404 A.D.) by St Jerome is of importance for more than one reason. It was made directly from the Hebrew by one of the few Fathers who knew Hebrew. St Jerome had as his teacher a Jew, who taught him some traditional interpretations. He also had access to the three Greek translations, those of AQUILA, SYMMACHUS, and THEODOTION, which were made in the second century of our era, and were used by the great Origen for the compilation of the Hexapla. The Vulgate is not dependent on the LXX.

Two English translations of the Old Testament are at present in use, the AUTHORISED VERSION of 1611 executed at the command of James I, and the REVISED VERSION of 1885, the inception of which was due to the Convocation of Canterbury. These names are unfortunate, for the Version of 1611 was never fully authorised, and the title 'Revised' given to the Version of 1885 does not serve to distinguish

it from earlier translations, for the 'Authorised Version' was but a revision of the Bishops' Bible (1568), and the Bishops' Bible a revision of the Great Bible (1539). The 'Authorised Version' is probably so called because the work was carried out, as the title page testifies, 'By His Majesties special command¹.' For the same reason it is sometimes called, 'King James's Version.' It was never authorised in any way until 1661, when the Epistles and Gospels were inserted in the Revised Prayer Book from the 'new translation.' Thus fifty years passed before any part of the A.V. was authorised for use in the services of the English Church, and now after nearly three hundred years the authorised version of the Psalms is not the version of King James, but the version of the Great Bible.

The language of A.V. was in part archaic from the first, for it was founded upon the work of William Tyndale (martyred 1536). In ordinary editions, however, a modern look has been given to A.V. by a multitude of small changes introduced by successive editors and printers². A few examples of such changes are given here under three heads.

(a) Spelling.

1 K. i. 9, the kings (king's) sons...the kings (king's) servants.

1 K. xviii. 5, that we leese (lose) not all the beasts.

1 K. xviii. 28, cut themselves...with swords and lancers (lancets). (Lances or spears are meant.)

2 K. iv. 35, the child neesed (sneezed) seven times.

2 K. vi. 16, they that be with us are moe then (more than) they that be with them.

(b) Grammatical forms.

1 K. vii. 13, Solomon...fet (fetched) Hiram out of Tyre.

2 K. ix. 32, He list (lifted) up his face.

2 K. xii. 18, His fathers had dedicate (dedicated).

¹ The inscription, 'Appointed to be read in Churches,' was taken over by the printer in 1611 from the title page of the Bishops' Bible, which was appointed by Convocation to be so read.

² See Scrivener's Introduction prefixed to the *Cambridge Paragraph Bible* (1873).

(c) Syntax.

1 K. vi. 1, In the four hundred and fourscore year (and eightieth year).

1 K. xv. 14, Asa his heart (Asa's heart) was perfect.

1 K. xvi. 23, In the thirty and one year (and first year).

In spite, however, of the work of editors and printers a number of archaisms remain in the Authorised Version of Kings. Such are found in the following passages.

1 K. v. 4, Evil occurrent, i.e. untoward event.

1 K. v. 6, There is not among us any that can skill (understand how) to hew timber.

1 K. xviii. 21, How long halt ye (go ye limping) between two opinions?

2 K. ii. 19, The water is naught (naughty, bad. Cp. Jer. xxiv. 2, A.V.).

2 K. xv. 5, A several (separate) house.

None of these archaisms is changed in the text of R.V., the Revisers declaring in their Preface that they 'thought it no part of their duty to reduce [the language of A.V.] to conformity with modern usage.'

The Revisers in fact touched the translation of the books of Kings with a sparing hand. Perhaps the main difference between their work and that of their predecessors is that whereas in the Heb. text A.V. usually follows the *Kērt*, R.V. follows as far as possible the *Kēthib*; see 1 K. i. 47; ix. 18; 2 K. xix. 37. A second important difference is found in the margins of the two versions. R.V. refers not infrequently to the readings of the 'ancient authorities,' or 'ancient versions,' sometimes specifying which are meant; see 1 K. vi. 8; vii. 40; xi. 15; xiii. 12; xv. 6; xxi. 23. Such references hardly occur in the margin of A.V.

Two groups of changes have been introduced into the text with happy result.

The first group secures a more accurate geographical nomenclature. Thus 'the river' where the Euphrates is meant, is uniformly given with a capital letter, 'the River' (1 K. iv. 24; xiv. 15). The Heb. term *Shephēlah* which designates the strip of low hill country between the Judæan mountains and the

coastland of the Mediterranean is rendered 'the lowland' (1 K. x. 27) as in Deut. i. 7 *al.* Similarly the term *Arābah*, which designates the deep valley which runs North and South of the Dead Sea, is adopted in R.V. instead of the vague term, 'the plain' (2 K. xiv. 25; xxv. 4). The *Gebalites*, i.e. the inhabitants of Gebal (Byblus) in Northern Phoenicia, are recognised, and (rightly) appear in 1 K. v. 18. *Gaza* takes the place of the unusual form *Assah* in 1 K. iv. 24.

The second group of changes embraces terms belonging to the unlawful worship practised during the period of the kings. The term 'grove' used in A.V. and derived from LXX., entirely disappears, the original Heb. word *Ashērah* being retained in R.V. untranslated. *Ashērah* (plural, *Ashērim*) means sometimes the wooden symbol, sometimes the rough wooden image of a goddess; sometimes again it is used as the name of the goddess. It never means 'grove.' See 1 K. xiv. 23; 2 K. xxi. 7. The 'images' (*maṣṣēboth*) of A.V. often mentioned with the *Ashērah* are rightly represented in R.V. as 'pillars' (marg., 'obelisks'). The monoliths found during the excavations at Gezer, Tell-eṣ-Ṣafi, and Taanach, are doubtless *maṣṣēboth*.

Interesting changes introduced into the text of R.V. are found in the following passages; 1 K. v. 9; x. 28; xi. 28; xii. 31; 2 K. xix. 7, 23, 24; xxii. 14; xxiii. 17; xxv. 4. Other changes (of more doubtful value) appear in 1 K. xvi. 34; xvii. 1; 2 K. xvi. 18. Important changes suggested in the margin are found in 1 K. iv. 24 ('beyond the River'); xx. 33; xxi. 10; 2 K. xv. 5; xviii. 4; 23. Many of the marginal readings are superior to those which were allowed to remain in the text.

It is indeed only very rarely that the margin can be neglected by the student. Even when the alternative renderings do not appear to be clearly superior, they may serve one or more of three useful purposes. Sometimes they point to an ambiguity in the Hebrew which can only be solved by an appeal to the context. Thus the note, 'Heb. *a man of death*' is appended to the rendering, *a man worthy of death* (1 K. ii. 26), because the Heb. phrase may equally well denote, *a man as good as dead, a dead man*, as in 2 Sam. xix. 28. In 1 K. ix. 13; 2 K.

xviii. 4, *he called* and *one called* are equally admissible renderings, for the pronoun is not expressed in the Hebrew. Hence the passive renderings given in the margin, as alternatives, are not grammatically inferior to the active renderings given in the text; the true translations may be severally, *They (the cities) were called Cabul*; *It (the brasen serpent) was called Nehushtan*. Again, a frequent cause of ambiguity in Hebrew arises from the use of singular and plural. Most Heb. substantives may be used in the singular as collectives; hence arises the doubt between text and margin, *chariot* and *chariots* in 2 K. ii. 11; xiii. 14. On the other hand the word commonly used in Hebrew for 'God,' *Elohim*, is a plural in form, and in 2 K. xvii. 31 (and in other places) a marginal note points to the consequent ambiguity.

A further purpose of the marginal notes is to call attention to the difficulty which sometimes arises of finding an accurate equivalent for a Heb. word, even when the meaning is well known. *Fir* (1 K. v. 8; text) has the note, 'Or, *cypress*,' and *oak* (1 K. xiii. 14) the note 'Or, *terebinth*,' to shew that these Syrian trees resemble the English trees whose names are given in the text, but are not identical with them. A still more striking instance is supplied by 1 K. ii. 6, *the grave* (text), 'Heb. *Sheol*' (marg.). 'The Hebrew *Sheol*, which signifies the abode of departed spirits, and corresponds to the Greek Hades, or the under world, is variously rendered in the Authorised Version by "grave," "pit," and "hell." Of these renderings "hell," if it could be taken in its original sense as used in the Creeds, would be a fairly adequate equivalent for the Hebrew word; but it is so commonly understood of the place of torment that to employ it frequently would lead to inevitable misunderstanding. The Revisers therefore in the historical narratives have left the rendering "the grave" or "the pit" in the text, with a marginal note "Heb. *Sheol*" to indicate that it does not signify "the place of burial" (*Revisers' Preface to the Old Testament*).

The third purpose of the marginal notes is to call attention to *nuances* of meaning which depend on Hebrew thought or Hebrew custom. Thus in 2 K. xxii. 4; xxiii. 4; xxv. 18 (cp. xii. 9) the text of R.V. has 'keepers of *the door*.' This rendering is an accommodation to English thought; a man's *door*

represents the entrance to his home, and the home itself. But in the East the *threshold*, across which a man steps in entering his home, represents to him all the associations of home. To the Eastern the threshold, not the door, is a symbol. Accordingly the margin gives 'Heb. *threshold*' in all four passages. Another instance is found in 2 K. v. 1; xiii. 17; *victory* (text), 'Heb. *salvation*' (marg.). The English word *victory* suggests only a triumph over enemies, whereas the Heb. suggests rather deliverance from destruction by them.

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LET HIM THAT READETH UNDERSTAND.

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE KINGS.

NOW king David was old and stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat. Wherefore his servants said unto him, Let there be sought for my lord the king a young virgin: and let her stand before the king, and cherish him; and let her lie in thy bosom, that my lord the king may get heat. So they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag the Shunammite, and brought her to

CHS. I, II. SOLOMON IS CROWNED KING IN DAVID'S LIFETIME. HE ESTABLISHES HIS THRONE BY PUTTING CERTAIN DANGEROUS PERSONS (ADONIJAH, JOAB, SHIMRI) TO DEATH.

1—4. THE OLD AGE OF DAVID.

1. *Now king David*] Or, *And king David*. The opening words of Kings are the continuation of a narrative begun elsewhere, this narrative being according to the general opinion the Court History of David. Earlier extracts from the same History supply the narrative of 2 Sam. ix.—xx.; but whether 1 K. i. 1 was the immediate sequel of 2 Sam. xx. 26 cannot be known.

old] David was only seventy (2 Sam. v. 4) at the end of his reign, but Easterns age prematurely, and David's early life had been full of hardships.

stricken in years] Heb. *advanced in days*. LXX. *προβεβηκώς ημερας*, the phrase used Luke i. 7.

clothes] i.e. bed-clothes. The same Heb. word is used in the sing. in 1 Sam. xix. 13:

2. *stand before*] i.e. attend upon. Cp. x. 5 (marg.), xviii. 15. See also v. 15.

3. *all the coasts*] All the borders, i.e. the whole country included within these borders. The R.V. here retains the word 'coasts,' though it is obsolete in this quite general sense; in other places (e.g. 2 K. xv. 16) 'coasts' is changed to 'borders.'

the Shunammite] Native of Shunem, a well-known town on the north side of the Plain of Esdrelon. Cp. 2 K. iv. 8, 12. It is possible that *Shulammitte* (S. of S. vi. 13) is another form of the same word.

4 the king. And the damsel was very fair; and she cherished
 the king, and ministered to him; but the king knew her
 5 not. Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself,
 saying, I will be king: and he prepared him chariots and
 6 horsemen, and fifty men to run before him. And his
 father had not displeased him¹ at any time in saying, Why
 hast thou done so? and he was also a very goodly man;

¹ Or, *all his life*

5-10. ADONIJAH CLAIMS THE SUCCESSION.

In a polygamous country the question of succession is always beset with difficulties. The firstborn son as such has no birthright, for either he may be the son of a concubine, or his mother, though acknowledged as a wife, may not be the chief wife. Cp. 2 K. xxiii. 30, note. The king usually designates his heir from among his sons, and often chooses the son of the favourite wife. Cp. 2 Chr. xi. 21, 22. But it is not uncommon for the king to postpone his choice, for when once the choice is announced, the friends of the heir have been known to hasten the king's death, lest he should change his mind. It appears in the present case from a comparison of v. 6 with v. 13 that though David had promised Bath-sheba that her son should succeed him, he had made no public announcement of it, and probably indeed shrank from making his will known.

Six sons are enumerated in 2 Sam. iii. 2-5 as born to David while he reigned in Hebron, all of whom were older than Solomon, who was born after David had made Jerusalem his capital. Of these, however, Amnon the first born and Absalom the third son perished before their father reached old age (2 Sam. xiii. 23-37; xviii. 9-15). Of Chileab, called 'Daniel' in 1 Chr. iii. 1, and of the remaining three, with the exception of Adonijah, nothing whatever is recorded.

Adonijah, as Solomon's elder brother (ii. 22), and as favoured by many of the chief men of Israel, looked upon the succession as his own right (ii. v. 15). He came next after Absalom in age (v. 6; 2 Sam. iii. 4).

5: *Then A...exalted himself*] Rather, **Now A. was exalting himself**, i.e. assuming such state as the following words describe.

'I will be king]. Rather, **I shall be king**, i.e. I am going to be king some day. The form of the Heb. verb is not voluntative, but future.

chariots and horsemen] In this he followed the example of Absalom (2 Sam. xv. 1).

men to run] Cp. note on xiv. 27, where the same Heb. word, *rāḥīm*, i.e. 'runners,' is translated 'guard.'

6. *at any time*] Rather as marg., **all his life**. Adonijah was a 'spoil child.'

and he was born after Absalom. And he conferred with 7
Joab the son of Zeruiah, and with Abiathar the priest: and
they following Adonijah helped him. But Zadok the priest, 8
and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and Nathan the prophet,
and Shimei, and Rei, and the mighty men which belonged
to David, were not with Adonijah. And Adonijah ¹slew 9
sheep and oxen and fatlings by the stone of Zohemoth,

¹ Or, sacrificed

7. *Joab*] His fate is told in ii. 18-34. He was David's nephew (1 Chr. ii. 15, 16). He fought on David's side in the civil war with the house of Saul (2 Sam. ii. 13, *al.*), and was made David's commander-in-chief (2 Sam. viii. 16; 1 Chr. xi. 6). He was guilty of great crimes; against David's will he killed Abner (2 Sam. iii. 27), Absalom (2 Sam. xviii. 14), and Amasa (2 Sam. xx. 10); and on the other hand at David's command he compassed by treachery the death of Uriah the Hittite (2 Sam. xi. 16, 17). He showed himself on occasion rather David's master than his servant (2 Sam. iii. 39; xix. 5-8).

Abiathar] He joined David when David was in danger from Saul (1 Sam. xxii. 20-23), and during David's reign was joint priest with Zadok (2 Sam. xx. 25). He was ultimately removed from the priesthood in favour of Zadok (ii. 26, 27, 35).

the priest] This, not 'high priest' or 'chief priest,' is the usual title in Samuel and Kings. Cp. 2 K. xi. 9; xvi. 10.

8. *Zadok*] See note on *Abiathar*, v. 7.

Benaiah] He succeeded Joab as commander-in-chief (ii. 35). In David's lifetime he commanded the Cherethites and Pelethites (2 Sam. xx. 23), the royal guards. His personal prowess is described in 2 Sam. xxiii. 20-23.

Nathan] The prophet who rebuked David for his sin with Bath-sheba (2 Sam. xii. 1 ff.). He it was also who gave the name 'Jedidiah' to Solomon at his birth (2 Sam. xii. 24, 25). According to 1 Chr. xxix. 29 he wrote part of the Acts of David's reign.

Shimei, and Rei] No person of the name of *Rei* is mentioned elsewhere among the great men of David's reign. Perhaps we should read *Shimei the friend (rē'eh) of the king*; Josephus (*Antiq.* vii. 346) has *Shimei (Συμεϊς) the friend of David*. This person may be the Shimei mentioned in iv. 18 as one of Solomon's twelve officers (*niççābîm*) who collected revenue (in kind) for the king.

the mighty men] In 2 Sam. xxiii. 8 ff. a list of these is given, in which Benaiah the son of Jehoiada and Joab together with his two brothers, Abishai and Asahel, are included. It is related of David's predecessor that 'when Saul saw any mighty man, or any valiant man, he took him unto him' (1 Sam. xiv. 52). A royāl body guard was thus formed. Cp. 1 Sam. viii. 11, 12.

9. *slew sheep and oxen*] Better as marg., *sacrificed sheep and oxen*. A sacrifice was a feast having religious sanction; it was

which is beside En-rogel; and he called all his brethren the king's sons, and all the men of Judah the king's servants: but Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah, and the mighty men, and Solomon his brother, he called not. Then Nathan spake unto Bath-sheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth it not? Now therefore come, let me, I pray thee, give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son

therefore a suitable occasion for gathering a large number of people together without arousing suspicion. Cp. 1 Sam. xvi. 2. Absalom started his rebellion with a sacrifice; in his case even the guests did not know that the feast covered a political design (2 Sam. xv. 7—12).

fallings] Animals specially fattened for killing. Cp. 2 Sam. vi. 13; Isa. i. 11; Amos v. 22.

by the stone of Zohaleth] 'The serpent's stone.' This particular is given not only to mark the exact spot, but also because it seems to have been considered unlawful to shed blood except upon a stone. Cp. 1 Sam. xiv. 33, 34. Slaying a beast was regarded as a sacrificial act, and the stone served for an altar. See Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, ed. 2, pp. 200—203.

En-rogel] The meaning of the name is *Fuller's Spring*. This spring was outside the city (2 Sam. xvii. 17) on the east or south-east, but its precise position is unknown. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, ed. 2, p. 172, note, says that the fountains of En-rogel and of Gibon (cp. v. 33) were the original sanctuaries of Jerusalem. Springs were regarded by the peoples of Syria as giving sanctity to the spot where they were found. Temples were often erected by them.

called] Invited. Cp. Matt. xxii. 3, 14.

servants] Officers of the king's court and of his kingdom. See note on x. 5.

11—27. THE INTERVENTION OF NATHAN.

11. *Nathan*] The prophet's interest in Solomon dated from the prince's birth (2 Sam. xii. 24, 25). Solomon (be it remembered) was not the son of David's guilty passion; he was the king's second son born from Bath-sheba, born after the king's punishment and after she had become his wife. Nathan acted in the belief that the king's repentance had been accepted by God.

knoweth it not] The words may mean either, 'is ignorant of the fact,' or 'hath not given his approval.'

12. *save thine own life, and the life of thy son*] Though David had several sons living (v. 9) only Solomon and Adonijah were candidates for the succession. The triumph of one would involve according to eastern practice the destruction of the other together with

Solomon. Go and get thee in unto king David, and say 13
unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto
thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall
reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? why then
doth Adonijah reign? Behold, while thou yet talkest there 14
with the king, I also will come in after thee, and confirm
thy words. And Bath-sheba went in unto the king into the 15
chamber: and the king was very old; and Abishag the
Shunammite ministered unto the king. And Bath-sheba 16
bowed, and did obeisance unto the king. And the king
said, What wouldest thou? And she said unto him, My 17
lord, thou swarest by the LORD thy God unto thine
handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign
after me, and he shall sit upon my throne. And now, 18
behold, Adonijah reigneth; and thou, my lord the king,

¹ Another reading is, *and now, my lord the king, thou &c.*

his chief adherents. In Burma in 1878 'a palace intrigue secured the throne to Prince Theebaw, and the new reign was inaugurated by an indiscriminate massacre of the late king's sons, with their mothers, wives, and children. Eight cartloads of butchered princes of the blood were cast according to custom into the river' (*Life of Lord Randolph Churehill*, by W. S. Churchill, vol. 1., p. 519).

13. *Go and get thee in*] No doubt Bath-sheba must have known about the previous proceedings of Adonijah, for they were quite undisguised, but Nathan was the first to hear of the feast and to guess its significance from the exclusion of himself and Solomon and Benaiah from the number of the guests.

Didst not thou...swear] See the introductory note to vv. 5—10.

15. *into the chamber*] LXX. εἰς τὸ ταμείον (cp. Matt. vi. 6). The king was too old to give audience except in his own apartment.

16. *did obeisance*] LXX. προσεκύνησεν. Cp. Matt. ii. 2; viii. 2. This is the usual word for prostrating oneself either in worship of God, or in reverence for a king or any superior.

17. *by the LORD*] The form of this oath was, 'As the LORD liveth' (2 Sam. xiv. 11).

unto thine handmaid] Bath-sheba not only calls David 'lord' (cp. Gen. xviii. 12), but also calls herself his 'handmaid.' Cp. 1 Sam. xxv. 41. The expression is merely a polite form; it does not imply that Bath-sheba was less than David's wife.

and he] The pronoun is emphatic.

18. *and thou, &c.*] See marg. The two words for *thou* (*attāh*) and *now* (*attāh*) differ in Hebrew by one letter only. The reading of the margin seems to be a mistaken repetition of the opening word of the verse.

19 knowest it not: and he hath ¹slain oxen and fatlings and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the
 20 host: but Solomon thy servant hath he not called. And ²thou, my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are upon thee, that thou shouldst tell them who shall sit on the throne of
 21 my lord the king after him. Otherwise it shall come to pass, when my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be counted ³offenders.
 22 And, lo, while she yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet came in. And they told the king, saying, Behold, Nathan the prophet. And when he was come in before
 23 the king, he bowed himself before the king with his face to the ground. And Nathan said, My lord, O king, hast thou
 24 said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? For he is gone down this day, and hath ¹slain
 25 oxen and fatlings and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and Abiathar

¹ Or, *sacrificed*

² Another reading is, *now*

³ Heb. *sinners*

20. *And thou*] The same variation of reading is found here as in v. 18. The smoother reading is, *and now*; but if the reading, *and thou*, is right, emphasis is given to the words *upon thee* which follow, 'And, my lord the king, the eyes of all Israel are upon thee, even thee.' All hangs on David's word.

that thou shouldst tell them] Bath-sheba urges David to make a public pronouncement in accordance with the oath which he had made to her in private.

21. *shall sleep with his fathers*] The same euphemism ('sleep' for 'death') is found in the word 'cemetery' (*κοιμητήριον*). Cp. Deut. xxxi. 16. Another euphemism is *gathered unto their fathers* (Jud. ii. 10), or *gathered to his people* (Gen. xxv. 8).

offenders] Or, *guilty*. Bath-sheba does not say outright that she and her son will be put to death, but she doubtless means this.

22. *Nathan the prophet*] Nathan tells nothing which Bath-sheba had not told already, but the effect of the story on the king was deepened by repetition. At this point Bath-sheba retires. Cp. v. 18.

25. *the captains of the host*] The corresponding phrase in v. 9 is, 'all the men of Judah the king's servants.' They were the officers of the Judæan militia. On the other hand the Guard ('the mighty men'), with the exception of Joab, did not belong to the party of Adonijah. Cp. v. 10.

the priest; and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, God save king Adonijah. But me, even me thy 26 servant, and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called. Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not 27 shewed unto thy 'servants who should sit on the throne of my lord the king after him? Then king David answered 28 and said, Call me Bath-sheba. And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king. And the king 29 sware, and said, As the LORD liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity, verily as I sware unto thee 30 by the LORD, the God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; verily so will I do this day. Then 31 Bath-sheba bowed with her face to the earth, and did obeisance to the king, and said, Let my lord king David live for ever. And king David said, Call me Zadok the 32 priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king. And the king 33 said unto them, Take with you the servants of your lord, and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule,

¹ Another reading is, *servant*

God save king Adonijah] Lit. 'Let king Adonijah live'; Vulg. *vivat rex Adonias*. Cp. v. 31; Neh. ii. 3 (with the hyperbolic addition 'for ever'); also 2 K. xi. 12; 1 Sam. x. 24.

28—40. DAVID'S DECISION; SOLOMON ANOINTED.

28. *she...stood before the king*] Nathan was not present. Cp. v. 31.

29. *As the LORD liveth, who hath redeemed my soul out of all adversity*] David uses the same oath in 2 Sam. iv. 9. The king's former energy returns to him for a while.

31. *live for ever*] See note on v. 15.

33. *the servants of your lord*] Cp. v. 9. Some of these were added with Adonijah, but not all, and in particular not the 'mighty men' (v. 10).

Solomon my son] Cp. v. 30, 'Solomon thy son' (David to Bath-sheba). Bath-sheba in speaking to David says 'Solomon thy servant' (v. 19) and 'Solomon my son' (v. 21). In a polygamous society the phrase 'my son' in the mouth of the head of the household has an emphasis which it does not carry among us.

mine own mule] Cp. x. 15; xviii. 5; 2 Sam. xlii. 19; xviii. 9. It is clear from these passages that mules were highly valued, and were

- 34 and bring him down to Gihon: and let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel: and blow ye with the trumpet; and say, God save king Solomon.
- 35 Then ye shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and I have appointed him to be ¹prince over Israel and over

¹ Or, leader

much used in kings' households. There were (and are) but few roads in Judah suitable for wheeled traffic, and riding is more usual than driving. Cp. x. 26, note; G. A. Smith, *Historical Geography*, ed. 3, pages 329—331. This mark of the king's favour even taken by itself puts Solomon above Adonijah. Cp. Esth. vi. 6—8.

Gihon] The name means 'the place at which waters break forth,' 'the spring' (or 'springs'). From 2 Chr. xxxii. 30, where mention is made of 'the upper spring of the waters of Gihon,' we may conclude that there were at least two springs on this site, an upper and a lower. The upper Gihon is perhaps to be identified with the modern 'St Mary's Well' in the valley of Kidron, from which an ancient rock-cut channel leads down to the pool which is usually identified with the pool of Siloam mentioned in John ix. 7. The site of the lower spring of Gihon is at present unknown, but it was probably not far distant. Thus the anointing of Solomon was to take place on the east of the city. Gihon was chosen perhaps as an ancient sanctuary; see note on *En-rogel*, v. 9.

34. *anoint him*] Nothing is said of *crowning*, though crowns were in use for kings at this time. Saul wore a crown (2 Sam. i. 10), and David assumed the crown of the king of Ammon (2 Sam. xii. 30; but see marg. there). At a later date Joash was solemnly crowned king of Judah (2 K. xi. 12). In any case anointing was the more important ceremony, for it invested the king with a sacred character (1 Sam. xxiv. 6; xxvi. 9; 2 Sam. i. 14). Priests were consecrated with the anointing oil (Exod. xxx. 30; Lev. iv. 3), and prophets likewise (1 K. xix. 16). Cp. Ps. cv. 15. Even things were dedicated to God by anointing. Cp. Lev. viii. 10, 'Moses anointed the tabernacle and all that was therein.'

blow ye with the trumpet] Cp. 2 K. ix. 13; xi. 14; 2 Sam. xv. 10.

God save king Solomon] Cp. v. 25, note.

35. *Then ye shall come up after him*] i.e. follow him in procession of state.

he shall come and sit upon my throne] Solomon is to take his seat formally on David's throne, as a sign that for the future he will be judge of Israel instead of his father. Cp. 2 K. xv. 5. Solomon is to act for David, as Jotham acted for Azariah (Uzziah).

prince] Heb. *nāgīd*. This word may be described as the religious title of the ruler of Israel, while 'king' (Heb. *melech*), which was applied freely to heathen rulers, was the secular title. In accordance

Judah. And Benaiah the son of Jehoiada answered the 36 king, and said, Amen: the LORD, the God of my lord the king, say so too. As the LORD hath been with my lord 37 the king, even so be he with Solomon, and make his throne greater than the throne of my lord king David. So Zadok 38 the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the Cherethites and the Pelethites, went down, and caused Solomon to ride upon king David's mule, and brought him to Gihon. And Zadok the priest took 39 the horn of oil out of the Tent, and anointed Solomon.

with this distinction *nāgīd* is constantly used of the ruler of Israel, when the reference is to God's *choice* or *appointment* of him to be king. Cp. 1 Sam. x. 1 (Samuel to Saul) 'The LORD hath anointed thee to be prince; 1 Sam. xiii. 14 (Samuel of David) 'The LORD hath sought him a man...to be prince'; 2 Sam. vii. 8 (the LORD to David) 'I took thee from the sheepcote, ...that thou shouldest be prince.' See also 2 K. xx. 5; 1 Chr. v. 2.

over Israel and over Judah] Judah is mentioned separately as David's own tribe, from which his closest adherents were drawn. Cp. 2 Sam. ii. 4; xii. 8; xix. 11—15, 40—43.

36. *Amen*] LXX. γένοιτο, 'may it come to pass!' The word is in form an adjective, meaning 'firm, true'; used as an adverb it may be translated 'verily' or 'yea.' Cp. Deut. xxvii. 15—16; Jer. xxviii. 6.

37. *his throne*] The throne is a symbol of a king's greatness and honour. Cp. 2 K. xxv. 28; 2 Sam. vii. 13, 16.

38. *the Cherethites and the Pelethites*] These formed David's body-guard. Cp. 2 Sam. viii. 18; xv. 18, 'and all the Cherethites and all the Pelethites, and all the Gittites, six hundred men which came after him from Gath, passed on before the king.' The Cherethites were almost certainly Philistines (1 Sam. xxx. 14; Ezek. xxv. 16; Zeph. ii. 5); and it is probable that the Pelethites who are mentioned in 2 Sam. xv. 18 between the Gittites and the Cherethites belonged to the same race. Nothing is said of these guards after the time of David, unless the Carites of 2 K. xi. 4 are the Cherethites. The Peshitta has 'the archers and the slingers' for 'the Cherethites and the Pelethites,' but the form of the words is gentilic, so that the English versions are undoubtedly right. Foreign guards are well-known to history; the Varangians (Northmen) of the Eastern Emperors, the Scottish Archers of Louis XI. of France, and the Swiss Guards of the Pope are a few out of many instances.

39. *the Tent*] The tent which David had pitched to receive the ark (2 Sam. vi. 17). Oil brought out of this tent would be regarded as *holy oil*, inasmuch as it was originally intended for use in the sanctuary. Cp. Ps. lxxxix. 20. We have, however, no means of knowing whether it was the specially prepared mixture described in Exod. xxx. 23—25 as a 'holy anointing oil' and expressly reserved there for anointing the vessels and the ministers of the Sanctuary (the Tent of Meeting).

And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God
 40 save king Solomon. And all the people came up after him,
 and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great
 41 joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them. And
 Adonijah and all the guests that were with him heard it
 as they had made an end of eating. And when Joab heard
 the sound of the trumpet, he said, Wherefore is this noise of
 42 the city being in an uproar? While he yet spake, Behold,
 Jonathan the son of Abiathar the priest came: and Adonijah
 said, Come in; for thou art a worthy man, and bringest
 43 good tidings. And Jonathan answered and said to Adonijah,
 44 Verily our lord king David hath made Solomon king: and
 the king hath sent with him Zadok the priest, and Nathan
 the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, and the
 Cherethites and the Pelethites, and they have caused him
 45 to ride upon the king's mule: and Zadok the priest and
 Nathan the prophet have anointed him king in Gihon: and
 they are come up from thence rejoicing, so that the city rang
 46 again. This is the noise that ye have heard. And also

40. *came up*] i.e. returned to the city after going down (v. 33) to Gihon in the Kidron valley.

the earth rent] Of course a hyperbole, as in 1 Sam. xiv. 15, 'the earth quaked' (on the occasion of the panic in the Philistine camp).

41—49. THE EFFECT OF THE NEWS OF THE ANOINTING ON THE SUPPORTERS OF ADONIJAH.

41. *Wherefore is this noise of the city being in an uproar?*] Lit., Why doth the voice of the city roar? The 'distant hum' was exchanged for the sound of the trumpet and the shouting of the people. Joab's curt question is spoilt by the weak paraphrase of the E. V.

42. *Jonathan the son of Abiathar*] He was swift of foot and a noted messenger (2 Sam. xv. 36; xvii. 17—21).

a worthy man] For bearing good tidings a person of some consideration was chosen, so that the reward for good tidings might be bestowed on a worthy recipient. Cp. 2 Sam. xviii. 19—33. The Cushite, a foreigner, perhaps an Ethiopian, was chosen by Joab to bear tidings which David would receive as bad.

43. *Verily*] Rather, *Nay but*. Jonathan repels the suggestion that he is bringing good tidings. The same Heb. word is used with the same force in Gen. xvii. 19. Abraham doubts the promise made of the birth of a son from Sarah and exclaims, 'Oh that Ishmael might live before thee,' and God replies, 'Nay, but Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son' (Isaac).

46. *And also*] The same Heb. word is used at the beginning of

Solomon sitteth on the throne of the kingdom. And 47
 moreover the king's servants came to bless our lord king
 David, saying, 'Thy God make the name of Solomon better
 than thy name, and make his throne greater than thy
 throne: and the king bowed himself upon the bed. And 48
 also thus said the king, Blessed be the LORD, the God
 of Israel, which hath given one to sit on my throne this
 day, mine eyes even seeing it. And all the guests of 49
 Adonijah were afraid, and rose up, and went every man
 his way. And Adonijah feared because of Solomon; and 50
 he arose, and went, and caught hold on the horns of the
 altar. And it was told Solomon, saying, Behold, Adonijah 51

¹ Another reading omits *Thy*.

v. 47. And moreover. It corresponds to the old-fashioned term *item*, and is used here to enumerate the separate pieces of bad news: they have anointed Solomon (*v. 45*), *item* Solomon has taken his seat on the throne (*v. 46*), *item* David's officers have hastened to express their agreement with all that has been done (*v. 47*).

47. *to bless*] i.e. 'to congratulate.' Cp. 2 Sam. viii. 10.

Thy God] This is the reading of the 'written' Hebrew text (*K'thib*). The more usual expression is 'Jehovah (the LORD) thy God.' The 'read' text (*K'ri*) and LXX. have 'God' simply; so A.V. and R.V. marg., and this is better.

bowed himself upon the bed] The king joined in the prayer of his servants by prostrating himself as well as he could upon his bed. Cp. Gen. xlvii. 31.

48. *which hath given one to sit on my throne this day*] LXX. *one of my seed*. David recognises the hand of God in the events which had brought about a decision between the claims of Adonijah and of Solomon.

50—53. ADONIJAH SPARED BY SOLOMON.

50. *the horns of the altar*] The altar of burnt offering had four projections at the corners called 'horns' (Exod. xxvii. 2). (See the illustration of an altar shewing the remains of such projections in *P.E.F. Quarterly Statement for 1907*, page 196.) These 'horns' are frequently mentioned in the O. T., and some special significance was attached to them, for (1) upon them fugitives laid hold, when they claimed the right of sanctuary (cp. ii. 28); and (2) upon them the blood of the victim had to be put by the high priest (Exod. xxix. 12). The notion that victims were bound to the horns of the altar lacks support. Cp. Kirkpatrick's note on Ps. cxviii. 27. The custom of regarding the altar as a refuge for fugitives was ancient. The temple was the LORD's house, the altar the table which received His food

feareth king Solomon: for, lo, he hath laid hold on the horns of the altar, saying, Let king Solomon swear unto me 'this day' that he will not slay his servant with the sword. And Solomon said, If he shall shew himself a worthy man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth: but if wickedness be found in him, he shall die. So king Solomon sent, and they brought him down from the altar. And he came and did obeisance to king Solomon: and Solomon said unto him, Go to thine house.

2 Now the days of David drew nigh that he should die;

¹ Or, *first of all*

(Ezek. xli. 22; Mal. i. 7), and the suppliant who clung to the altar was the LORD's guest. Cp. Exod. xxi. 14, where the wilful murderer is expressly excluded from the protection of such a sanctuary. In the case of Joab (ii. 28—34), a wilful murderer, Solomon acted in accordance with the exceptional rule, and ordered Benaiah to slay him at the altar. See also 2 K. xi. 15.

51. *this day*] Rather as marg., *first of all*. The same phrase is used Gen. xxv. 31, 33 (cp. marg.) and 1 Sam. ii. 16, 'presently' (i.e. as marg. 'first').

with the sword] The sword was the regular instrument of execution. Only in the case of special crimes was another process (stoning) used. Cp. xxi. 13.

52. *And Solomon said*] Solomon makes a conditional promise. *not an hair &c.*] Cp. 1 Sam. xiv. 45; 2 Sam. xiv. 11; Matt. x. 30. A proverbial expression.

53. *they brought him down*] willing or unwilling, whether he was satisfied with Solomon's promise or not. 'Down,' because altars were set up on high places. Cp. iii. 2—4; 2 Sam. xxiv. 18.

did obeisance] Cp. v. 16 (note). Thus did Adonijah submit himself to the new king.

Go to thine house] Solomon does not detain him, but allows him to return home.

CH. II. 1—12. DAVID'S DYING CHARGE TO SOLOMON. HIS DEATH.

These verses contain what may be called David's testament or will to Solomon. Another testament is given in 1 Chr. xxviii. 9—31. There is, however, a remarkable difference between the two. In Chron. the chief subject of the charge is the building of a Temple, in Kings the contrary nothing whatever is said about the proposed building; again, while Kings contains David's directions as to Joab and Shimei (vv. 5—9), in Chronicles no mention is made of either. The account in Chron. may be looked upon as supplementary to that given here.

David's charge to Solomon may be summed up under four heads

and he charged Solomon his son, saying, I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; and keep the charge of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgements, and his testimonies, according to that which is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest, and whithersoever thou

Or, *do wisely*

(1) to be faithful to JEHOVAH, (2) to avenge the blood shed by Joab, (3) to reward the sons of Barzillai for the services rendered by their father, (4) to put Shimei to death for his cursing of David at Bahurim.

The first part (*vv. 1-4*) resembles the charge given by the LORD to Joshua (*Josh. i. 7, 8*). It is expressed in Deuteronomic language and in general terms, such as any Israelite ruler might use to his successor. Only the substance of this part can be due to David, the wording belongs to the compiler of Kings. The second part (*vv. 5, 6*) raises a moral difficulty; why should Joab be put to death for crimes committed some years before, which David had passed over in his own lifetime? The answer is that according to Eastern ideas no lapse of time can cancel the duty of blood revenge; the duty passes from father to son. David was bound to both of Joab's victims, to Abner as to one who had eaten his bread and been dismissed in peace (*2 Sam. iii. 20, 21*), and to Amasa as to a kinsman (*2 Sam. xix. 13*). Forgiveness for the shedding of blood was alien from the thought of David's age and country. If David is to be blamed according to the moral standard of his contemporaries, it is because he was afraid to execute blood revenge upon Joab during his own lifetime. (See article GOEL, 'Avenger of blood,' in *Hastings' Dictionary*.) The third part (*v. 7*) shews that David could remember good as well as evil. The fourth part (*vv. 8, 9*) raises another moral difficulty. A curse seems to us a small thing to put a man to death for, particularly after the lapse of some years. But it was otherwise in David's country. Curses and imprecations are regarded in the East as effectual instruments for inflicting injury, and therefore as worthy of punishment. To curse a ruler or judge is specially forbidden by the Law (*Exod. xxii. 28*). No penalty is mentioned, it is true, in this case, but in the analogous case of cursing father or mother the penalty assigned is death. David promised (mainly from policy; *2 Sam. xix. 16-23*) to spare Shimei's life, but this oath did not according to Eastern ideas cancel the offence. The curse remains in activity. Hence David reminds Solomon that the injury done still remained unpunished. Forbearance might be exercised for a special reason, but a whole-hearted remission of the penalty would have appeared a senseless act to the Israelites of David's day.

2. *I go*] Cp. *Josh. xxiii. 14*.

3. *to keep his statutes, &c.*] A favourite Deuteronomic phrase. Cp. *Deut. vi. 20; xi. 1 al.*

prosper] Better as marg., *do wisely*. Cp. *Deut. xxix. 9*.

turnest thyself: that the LORD may establish his word which he spake concerning me, saying, If thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, there shall not fail thee (said he) a man on the throne of Israel. Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruah did unto me, even what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet. Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down

¹ Heb. *set*

4. *his word*] Cp. 2 Sam. vii. 12—16; Ps. lxxxix. 19 ff.; cxxxii. 12. *with all their heart and with all their soul*] The Hebrews thought that the heart was the seat of the intellect, and the soul the seat of the affections; hence Heb. 'heart' corresponds to Eng. 'mind'; and Heb. 'soul' to Eng. 'heart.' For the form of the phrase cp. Deut. iv. 29.

5. *unto Abner*] Cp. 2 Sam. iii. 21—30.

unto Amasa] Cp. 2 Sam. xx. 8—10.

the son of Jether] *Jether* is called *Ithra* in 2 Sam. xvii. 25. The two words are different forms of one name, and resemble each other more closely in Hebrew than in English. Similarly Moses' father-in-law *Jethro* is once called *Jether* (Exod. iv. 18, marg.).

and shed the blood of war in peace] Lit. **and put** (Heb. *set*), &c. This clause, though found in the Versions, is most probably an ancient gloss. In this verse David is represented as recalling the fact that Joab killed Abner and Amasa, 'the two captains of the host of Israel,' with his own hand, just as if they had been foes whom he had met on the field of battle. Joab 'put the blood of war upon his own girdle and shoes.' The dreadful picture of blood-guiltiness is complete; the blood of these two men was, literally speaking, upon Joab for all men to see. But a scribe who wished to leave nothing unsaid, and was anxious to express the contrast suggested by the words 'the blood of war' began to re-write the clause, 'and put the blood of war upon his girdle' in order to introduce into it the antithetical clause 'in peace.' His gloss, being incomplete as a sentence, did not oust the original clause, but found its way into the text immediately in front of the words it was meant to explain. This is the best explanation of the repetition found in the verse,

'and put (set) the blood of war in peace,'

'and put the blood of war upon his girdle.'

The former clause should therefore be omitted as not forming part of the original text.

6. *according to thy wisdom*] Cp. v. 9. Neither Joab nor Shimei is

to 'the grave in peace. But shew kindness unto the sons 7 of Barzillai the Gileadite, and let them be of those that eat at thy table: for so they came to me when I fled from Absalom thy brother. And, behold, there is with thee 8 Shimei the son of Gera, the Benjamite, of Bahurim, who cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the LORD, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword. Now therefore hold him not 9 guiltless, for thou art a wise man; and thou wilt know what thou oughtest to do unto him, and thou shalt bring his hoar

¹ Heb. *Sheol*

to be put to death at once; Solomon is to wait for some suitable opportunity. As events fell out, Shimei was executed after breaking a compact, and Joab suffered for the reviving ambition of Adonijah.

7. *Barzillai*] He was a very old man at the time of Absalom's rebellion, but he shewed his fidelity by receiving David when he fled to Gilead, and by provisioning his followers. This faithfulness of a man of another tribe, a Gileadite, made a deep impression on the king. Cp. 2 Sam. xvii. 27-29; xix. 31-40.

of those that eat at thy table] Cp. xviii. 19; 2 Sam. ix. 7, 10, 11; 2 K. xxv. 29. It does not necessarily mean that Barzillai's sons would eat at the same table as the king. In 2 Sam. xi. 8 it is said that 'a mess of meat from the king' followed Uriah, when he left David's presence. So again in Ezra iv. 14 certain officials of the Persian king living in Syria describe themselves as 'eating the salt of the palace.' 'To eat at the king's table' may mean no more than 'to receive certain allowances from the king.'

so they came] Rather, **so they came near**. To 'draw nigh' is to 'help' (Ps. lxix. 18), just as to 'stand afar off' (Ps. xxxviii. 11) is to 'refuse help.' 'So,' i.e. with food and sustenance in my distress.

8. *Shimei*] He was a kinsman of Saul. He cursed David as a man of blood, presumably charging him with the slaughter of the house of Saul. He met David after Absalom's defeat and death with 1000 Benjamites, and asked and obtained his life. Cp. 2 Sam. xvi. 5-14; xix. 16-23.

Gera] Cp. 1 Chr. viii. 3.

Bahurim] This place was east or north-east of Jerusalem (2 Sam. xvi. 5; xvii. 18), but its precise position is unknown.

to Mahanaim] In the flight from Absalom. Mahanaim was east of Jordan (2 Sam. xvii. 22, 24), and (probably) north of the Jabbok (Gen. xxxii. 2, 22, 23), but we cannot fix its position more definitely. Cp. iv. 14, note.

9. *Now therefore*] Rather, **And now**.

10 head down to ¹the grave with blood. And David slept with
 11 his fathers, and was buried in the city of David. And the
 days that David reigned over Israel were forty years: seven
 years reigned he in Hebron, and thirty and three years
 reigned he in Jerusalem.

12 And Solomon sat upon the throne of David his father;
 13 and his kingdom was established greatly. Then Adonijah
 the son of Haggith came to Bath-sheba the mother of
 Solomon. And she said, Comest thou peaceably? And
 14 he said, Peaceably. He said moreover, I have somewhat

¹ Heb. *Sheol*

10. *slept with his fathers*] Cp. i. 21, note.

the city of David] This was that part of Jerusalem which was once occupied by a Jebusite fortress (2 Sam. v. 7, 9), and afterwards became David's residence (2 Sam. vi. 12). Cp. viii. 1, note.

11. *seven years*] More exactly, 'seven years and six months' (2 Sam. ii. 11; v. 5).

12. *upon the throne of David his father*] The Chronicler (always anxious to remind us that 'the kingdom is the LORD'S') writes 'on the throne of the LORD as king instead of David his father' (1 Chr. xxix. 23): *his kingdom was established greatly*] In Chron. '[he] prospered; and all Israel obeyed him.'

13—25. ADONIJAH'S AMBITION REVIVES. HE IS PUT TO DEATH.

No events are more difficult to interpret than those which take place within the precincts of a court, and the events recorded in these verses are no exception to the rule. But one thing is clear. Of two brothers so near to the throne as Solomon and Adonijah one, according to Eastern ideas, must reign, and one must die. The atmosphere of suspicion in which Eastern courts are enveloped made any other *dénouement* impossible. Nothing was settled by Solomon's successful occupation of the throne, so long as his rival lived. A sudden revolution might reverse the apparent settlement. Solomon must fear Adonijah, and Adonijah must fear Solomon. We are told however that Solomon's rule was 'established greatly' (v. 12). Adonijah must therefore go to work cautiously in following the call of his ambition.

Now to receive Abishag the Shunammite as wife was to gain recognition as one who stood near to the succession. It was not unlike marrying the king's favourite daughter. Adonijah sought through Bath-sheba this recognition. Bath-sheba passed on the request to the king, and Solomon, seeing perhaps more clearly than his mother all that the request involved, at once decided to put Adonijah to death.

13. *Bath-sheba*] He came to the queen mother as the person who had most influence with Solomon. Cp. vv. 19, 20.

to say unto thee. And she said, Say on. And he said, ¹⁵ Thou knowest that the kingdom was mine, and that all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign: howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and is become my brother's: for it was his from the LORD. And now I ask one petition ¹⁶ of thee, 'deny me not. And she said unto him, Say on. And he said, Speak; I pray thee, unto Solomon the king, ¹⁷ (for he will not say thee nay,) that he give me Abishag the Shunammite to wife. And Bath-sheba said, Well; I will ¹⁸ speak for thee unto the king. Bath-sheba therefore went ¹⁹ unto king Solomon, to speak unto him for Adonijah. And the king rose up to meet her, and bowed himself unto her, and sat down on his throne, and caused a throne to be set for the king's mother; and she sat on his right hand. Then ²⁰ she said, I ask one small petition of thee; deny me not. And the king said unto her, Ask on, my mother: for I will not deny thee. And she said, Let Abishag the Shunammite ²¹ be given to Adonijah thy brother to wife. And king ²² Solomon answered and said unto his mother, And why dost thou ask Abishag the Shunammite for Adonijah? ask for him the kingdom also; for he is mine elder brother; even for him, and for Abiathar the priest, and for Joab the

¹ Heb. *turn not away my face*

^{15.} *set their faces on me*] i.e. 'expected, and intended me to be king.'

from the LORD] An expression of resignation.

^{16.} *one petition*] 'One thing out of all that would have been mine.'

^{19.} *rose up to meet her*] The king's mother always enjoys great honour and influence in the east. She is one, whereas the king's wives are many; and though she lives in the harem, she is not so strictly bound by its rules as the wives. The king's mother can communicate with the outer world with a freedom denied to the rest of the harem.

she sat on his right hand] Cp. Neh. ii. 6, where it is probable that the 'queen' means the king's mother.

^{20.} *one small petition*] Bath-sheba, completely blind to the significance of things, adds the epithet 'small.' Cp. v. 16.

^{21.} *thy brother*] To this appeal to kinship Solomon retorts in v. 22 that Adonijah is his elder brother, the most dangerous person of any to give Abishag to.

^{22.} *even for him, and for Abiathar &c.*] This translation which agrees with the Hebrew yields good sense. Solomon means that his mother is asking that which would bring about the result desired by

23 son of Zeruah. Then king Solomon swore by the LORD,
 saying, God do so to me, and more also, if Adonijah have
 24 not spoken this word against his own life. Now therefore
 as the LORD liveth, who hath established me, and set me on
 the throne of David my father, and who hath made me
 an house, as he promised, surely Adonijah shall be put
 25 to death this day. And king Solomon sent by the hand
 of Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he fell upon him, that
 26 he died. And unto Abiathar the priest said the king, Get
 thee to Anathoth, unto thine own fields; for thou art
 'worthy of death: but I will not at this time put thee
 to death, because thou barest the ark of the Lord God
 before David my father, and because thou wast afflicted
 27 in all wherein my father was afflicted. So Solomon thrust

¹ Heb. *a man of*

Abiathar and Joab. LXX. Vulg. follow a different reading, 'and he has Abiathar the priest, and Joab the son of Zeruah the chief captain is his confederate.' The meaning of this is, that the request is part of a plot in which Abiathar and Joab have a share.

23. *swore by the LORD*] The officers of an eastern court will not act against a member of the reigning house, unless they know that the king's decision is final.

God do so to me] This form of oath is a euphemism. It would be ill-omened to *name* the evils which the oath-taker calls down upon himself.

25. *fell upon him*] Lit. 'met him,' a euphemism for 'struck the executioner's stroke.' Cp. Jud. viii. 21; xv. 12; 1 Sam. xxii. 17; 2 Sam. i. 15 *al.* The execution of a person of importance was not held to be a dishonourable duty among the Hebrews.

26, 27. THE REMOVAL OF ABIATHAR FROM THE PRIESTHOOD.

26. *Anathoth*] A priestly city of Benjamin, belonging to 'the children of Aaron' (Josh. xxi. 13—19), the modern 'Anâta three miles NNE. of Jerusalem. Jeremiah who was a priest belonged to this place (Jer. i. 1).

I will not...put thee to death] There were scruples about killing a priest. Cp. 1 Sam. xxii. 17.

thou barest the ark] 2 Sam. xv. 24, 29; xx. 25. Two priests carried the ark, of whom Abiathar was one.

thou wast afflicted] See note on i. 7; and cp. 1 Sam. xxii. 20—23; xxiii. 9; xxx. 7.

out Abiathar from being priest unto the LORD; that he might fulfil the word of the LORD, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh. And the tidings 28 came to Joab: for Joab had turned after Adonijah, though he turned not after Absalom. And Joab fled unto the Tent of the LORD, and caught hold on the horns of the altar. And it was told king Solomon, Joab is fled unto 29 the Tent of the LORD, and, behold, he is by the altar. Then Solomon sent Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, saying, Go, fall upon him. And Benaiah came to the Tent of the 30 LORD, and said unto him, Thus saith the king, Come forth. And he said, Nay; but I will die here. And Benaiah brought the king word again, saying, Thus said Joab, and thus he answered me. And the king said unto him, Do as 31 he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou mayest take away the blood, which Joab shed without cause, from me and from my father's house. And the LORD shall 32 return his blood upon his own head, because he fell upon two men more righteous and better than he, and slew them

27. *that he might fulfil the word of the LORD*] Abiathar was the grandson of Ahitub (1 Sam. xxii. 20), who in turn was the grandson of Eli (1 Sam. xiv. 3). To satisfy the terms of the prophecy against Eli (1 Sam. ii. 36), we must conclude that the expulsion of Abiathar from the priesthood, involved the expulsion of his whole house with him. The closest parallel to this strong action by the civil authority against the priesthood is to be found in Josiah's abolition of the service at the high places (2 K. xxiii. 8, 9).

28—34. THE FATE OF JOAB.

28. *caught hold on the horns of the altar*] Cp. i. 50, note.

30. *and said unto him*] Benaiah was more scrupulous than Solomon about slaying a man in the sacred Tent.

I will die here]. Easterns are apt to catch at such an expression as this in the mouth of an enemy, as giving the signal to strike the fatal blow. Solomon takes it up in the next verse.

31. *and bury him*] Burial was rarely refused, but cp. 2 Sam. xxi. 8—10; 2 K. ix. 34, 35; Jer. xxvi. 23.]

from me and from my father's house] Solomon urges that the duty of blood-revenge should overcome all ordinary scruples.

32. *return his blood*] Cp. 2 Sam. i. 16. When the blood of Joab cries to the LORD for vengeance, the cry will not be heard because of Joab's own blood-guiltiness.

with the sword, and my father David knew it not, *to wit*,
 Abner the son of Ner, captain of the host of Israel, and
 33 Amasa the son of Jether, captain of the host of Judah. So
 shall their blood return upon the head of Joab, and upon
 the head of his seed for ever: but unto David, and unto
 his seed, and unto his house, and unto his throne, shall
 34 there be peace for ever from the LORD. Then Benaiah the
 son of Jehoiada went up, and fell upon him, and slew him;
 35 and he was buried in his own house in the wilderness. And
 the king put Benaiah the son of Jehoiada in his room over
 the host: and Zadok the priest did the king put in the
 36 room of Abiathar. And the king sent and called for Shimei,

33. *upon the head of Joab*] Cp. 2 Sam. iii. 29.

unto David...shall there be peace] Peace through the avenging of
 innocent blood. Cp. Deut. xix. 13.

34. *went up*] The Tent was pitched in the city of David (2 Sam.
 vi. 12, 17), perhaps at its highest point. Sacred places were usually
 high places. Cp. iii. 3.

in his own house] Cp. 1 Sam. xxv. 1 (of Samuel). The meaning
 probably is 'in his own sepulchre.'

35. THE ADVANCEMENT OF BENAIAH AND OF ZADOK.

35. *in the room of Abiathar*] LXX. 'to be chief ('first') priest in-
 stead of Abiathar.' In 2 Sam. Zadok's name regularly precedes that of
 Abiathar when the two priests are mentioned, and in 2 Sam. xv. 24—29
 David gives instructions to Zadok as though ignoring the existence of
 Abiathar. Possibly Abiathar passed under a cloud of suspicion at the
 time of Absalom's rebellion, and the order of their names in 2 Sam.
 reflects David's feeling and not the official precedence of the two men.
 In any case Abiathar was the senior. Cp. v. 26, note.

At this point the LXX. inserts a passage of ten verses collected
 from other chapters of 1 Kings, which was perhaps intended to serve as
 a kind of summary of the reign of Solomon. It records God's gift to
 the king of wisdom exceeding that of the Egyptians (iv. 29, 30), the
 bringing in of the daughter of Pharaoh into the city of David until the
 Temple was finished (iii. 1), the number of Solomon's burden-bearers
 and stone-cutters (v. 15), the making of the brasen sea, and bases, and
 lavers (vii. 23, 27, 38), the entry of Pharaoh's daughter into her own
 house and Solomon's yearly offerings (ix. 24, 25), the number of
 Solomon's task-masters (v. 16), the names of the cities built by the
 king (cp. ix. 15, 17, 18), and the order in which Solomon's building
 was carried out.

and said unto him, Build thee an house in Jerusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither. For 37 on the day thou goest out, and passest over the brook Kidron, know thou for certain that thou shalt surely die: thy blood shall be upon thine own head. And Shimei said 38 unto the king, The saying is good: as my lord the king hath said, so will thy servant do. And Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem many days. And it came to pass at the end 39 of three years, that two of the servants of Shimei ran away unto Achish, son of Maacah, king of Gath. And they told Shimei, saying, Behold, thy servants be in Gath. And 40 Shimei arose, and saddled his ass, and went to Gath to Achish, to seek his servants: and Shimei went, and brought his servants from Gath. And it was told Solomon that 41 Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath, and was come again. And the king sent and called for Shimei, and said 42

36—46. THE FATE OF SHIMEI.

LXX., by way of introduction to the account which follows, here repeats (with some variations) *vv.* 8, 9, which contain David's last instructions with regard to Shimei.

36. *Build thee an house in Jerusalem*] Solomon wished to keep an eye upon Shimei.

37. *the brook Kidron*] This was the boundary of Jerusalem on the east; it is selected for mention by Solomon because Shimei's home, Bahurim, lay on the east or north-east of Jerusalem. Cp. xv. 13, note.

39. *Achish, son of Maacah*] In 1 Sam. xxvii. 2, 'Achish the son of Maoch.' The two words 'Maacah' and 'Maoch' appear to be two forms of the same name, but it is possible that two different persons are meant. If the Achish of 1 Sam. be the Achish of this verse, he must have reigned about 50 years.

Gath] One of the five chief cities of the Philistines (1 Sam. vi. 17). Its site is unknown, but it was no doubt an inland city not far from the border of Judah. The identification with Tell-es-Sâfi (22 miles WSW. of Jerusalem) is not improbable. Cp. Bliss and Macalister, *Excavations in Palestine*, pp. 63—65. The two excavators believe that a town existed here from the Seventeenth Century B.C. down to Seleucid times. A high place and massive foundations of town walls have been found on the site.

40. *went to Gath to Achish*] This action was not only a breach of Solomon's command, but also in itself an action open to misconception. A man already suspected of disloyalty betakes himself to a potential enemy of his sovereign.

unto him, Did I not make thee to swear by the LORD, and protested unto thee, saying, Know for certain, that on the day thou goest out, and walkest abroad any whither, thou shalt surely die? and thou saidst unto me, The saying that
 43 I have heard is good. Why then hast thou not kept the oath of the LORD, and the commandment that I have
 44 charged thee with? The king said moreover to Shimei, Thou knowest all the wickedness which thine heart is privy to, that thou didst to David my father: therefore the LORD
 45 shall return thy wickedness upon thine own head. But king Solomon shall be blessed, and the throne of David
 46 shall be established before the LORD for ever. So the king commanded Benaiah the son of Jehoiada; and he went out, and fell upon him, that he died. And the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon.

3 And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city

42. *Did I not make thee to swear?* Nothing is said of any oath in the Heb. text of v. 37, but LXX, adds at the end of the verse, *and the king made him swear on that day.*

45. *be blessed.* The king will prosper through the destruction of an evil-doer. Cp. Prov. xxv. 5.

CHS. III—XI. THE REIGN OF SOLOMON.

Though nine chapters are devoted to the account of Solomon and his deeds, the story of his reign is incomplete. Chs. iii., iv. present us with an account of Solomon's wisdom, and of the prosperity of his kingdom, put together from various sources. Some very general statements are added regarding the great extent of his dominions, which reached, we are told, from the Euphrates to the border of Egypt (iv. 21, 24). His reign is represented in general terms as pre-eminently peaceful. Chs. v.—vii. tell of Solomon's building achievements. Ch. viii. describes the dedication of the Temple. Chs. ix., x. contain various notices mainly of the king's transactions with foreigners. Ch. xi. strikes an entirely new note. It tells us that Solomon patronised foreign worships in order to please his numerous foreign wives. It specifies three formidable enemies which Solomon had, Hadad of Edom, Rezon of Damascus, and Jeroboam the Ephraimite his own officer.

A moment's consideration shews us that the material for the story of Solomon is arranged in these chapters according to subject only, and not chronologically. No dates are given except for the commencement and completion of Solomon's buildings.

The order of the chapters must not lead us to suppose that

of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall of Jerusalem round about. Only the people sacrificed in 2

Solomon's reign consisted of a long period of peace and prosperity followed by a few last years of apostasy and punishment. The statement that Solomon's apostasy took place 'when Solomon was old' (xi. 4) seems to be an expansion of the earlier unqualified statement of xi. 3. Further it is clear that Solomon's adversaries, Hadad and Rezon, began to assert themselves against him shortly after David's death (xi. 14—25). Solomon's reign was peaceful as compared with that of David, but it was by no means free from serious disturbance.

CII. III. 1—3. SOLOMON'S MARRIAGE. HIS
MANNER OF WORSHIP.

The division of chapter and verse is unfortunate. The last words of ch. ii. 46, 'And the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon,' should be treated as the beginning of ch. iii., as in Vulg. and LXX. (A), but when the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon, Solomon made affinity &c.¹

1. *affinity*] Connexion by marriage. In the 'Table of Kindred and Affinity' found at the end of the Prayer Book 'Kindred' means *relationship by blood* and 'Affinity' *relationship by marriage*. Solomon's marriage is mentioned as a matter of political importance; it implied some kind of alliance or friendship. Ahab similarly, in allying himself with the Zidonians, married the Zidonian princess, Jezebel.

Pharaoh] This is a general designation of the kings of Egypt, and not a proper name. Which of the Pharaohs is meant is not known. It was probably not the well-known Shishak (xi. 40) i.e. Sheshonk, but some earlier monarch.

his own house] See vii. 1—12.

the house of the LORD] See chs. v., vi.

the wall of Jerusalem] Cp. ix. 15; xi. 27. According to Benzinger (*in loco*) this 'the first' wall included not only the 'city of David' (which was on the eastern hill at the south end), but also David's buildings on the south end of the western hill. The two parts of the city were at this time almost separated by a deep valley, which formed a deep inlet into the city, the wall keeping always to the higher ground and crossing the head of the valley. At a later date the wall was carried across the mouth of the valley.

2. *Only the people sacrificed*] This statement is strangely abrupt.

¹ In LXX. (B) the last words of ii. 46 and the whole of iii. 1 are missing. The gap is filled by a lengthy interpolation made up thus, (a) iv. 20, 21, minus a few words, (b) a minor interpolation, (c) iv. 22—25, (d) iv. 2—6, mutilated, (e) iv. 26, (f) the missing words of iv. 21, (g) a statement that Solomon reigned over Israel and Judah in Jerusalem. After this interpolation iii. 2 follows, but the opening words ('Only the people') are missing. The text of the LXX. is in some confusion for both iv. 2—6 and iv. 22—24 occur also in the place in which they are found in the Heb. text.

the high places, because there was no house built for the name of the LORD until those days. And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father: only he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.

4 And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings

5 did Solomon offer upon that altar. In Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said,

6 Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said, Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great kindness,

Possibly some words (which should form the first half of *v.* 2) are missing to the effect that *Solomon did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD*. Cp. xxii. 43; 2 K. xii. 2, 3; xiv. 3, 4, *al.* Most of clinging to them. Cp. xi. 7, note. The Deuteronomic Law ordered the destruction of all altars erected on such places; Israel's sacrifices were to be offered at one sanctuary only (Deut. xii. 2-5, 13, 14). Solomon and his people however cannot be blamed for using high places, if (as most scholars now hold) the book of Deuteronomy was not written till a few years before its discovery in the Temple in the eighteenth year of King Josiah (2 K. xxii. 8).

for the name of the LORD] Cp. viii. 16, 17, 18, 20; 2 K. xxiii. 27; Deut. xii. 5; 2 Sam. vii. 13. In viii. 13, however Solomon, using a bold anthropomorphism, says, 'I have built...a place for thee to dwell in.'

loved the LORD] This expression is characteristic of Deuteronomy (vi. 5; xxx. 6, 16, 20), but it is rare in the rest of the Old Testament (Ps. xxxi. 23). See also what is said of Hezekiah (2 K. xviii. 5), and of Josiah (2 K. xxiii. 25).

in the statutes of David] 'Statutes' (Heb. *hukhoth*) means not only 'enactments' but also 'customs, practices.'

4-15. (Cp. 2 Chr. i. 3, 6-13.) SOLOMON'S DREAM. HIS PRAYER FOR WISDOM.

4. *Gibeon*] In Benjamin, perhaps the modern el-Jib, six miles north-west of Jerusalem.

a thousand burnt offerings] Cp. 2 Chr. i. 6. Probably this is a technical phrase like the Greek 'Hecatomb,' meaning a large number of sacrifices. The verb used is a frequentative; the meaning is perhaps that Solomon offered this great offering three times a year. Cp. ix. 25.

5. *in a dream*] 'Dreams' are associated with 'visions' as means by which God makes revelations to the prophets (Num. xii. 6; Joel ii. 28). Jeremiah complains that in his day some 'prophets' told 'lying dreams' (Jer. xxiii. 25, 32).

according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And 7 now, O LORD my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant 8 is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give thy servant therefore an ¹understanding heart to judge 9 thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy ²great people? And the 10

¹ Heb. *hearing*

² Heb. *heavy*

7. *I am but a little child*] Not to be understood literally; Solomon means that he is but a child for the mighty task which is assigned him. Cp. 1 Chr. xxix. 1. Similarly Jeremiah deprecates his call to be a prophet in the words; 'I cannot speak; for I am a child.' Solomon's age at his accession is not recorded.

how to go out or come in] i.e. how to begin or complete an undertaking. Cp. Num. xxvii. 17; 1 Sam. xviii. 13, 16.

9. *Give thy servant therefore an understanding heart*] On 'heart' see note on ii. 4. Solomon had already acquired a reputation for 'wisdom' in his father's lifetime (ii. 6, 9), and this prayer itself is a proof of the possession of true understanding. What then is the meaning of the request which the king makes that a certain thing may be granted him as a 'supernatural' gift, which he already possessed as a 'natural' endowment?

The answer to this question is supplied by the teaching of the New Testament. This teaching knows no such distinction between that which is natural and that which is supernatural, and it regards every power of Man whether it grows with his growth or not, as a gift. 'What hast thou,' St Paul asks, 'that thou didst not receive?' (1 Cor. iv. 7). Moreover the apostle specially reckons 'wisdom' among the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. xii. 4-11), and St James (i. 5) teaches that wisdom is a gift to be asked for from God.

But these powers or gifts are not held absolutely; not, that is, in isolation from the universal Grace of God. Each comes to man by 'a process of giving' (*δδου*), not as a thing given once for all (*δδμα*). Each has to be constantly renewed by its divine Author according to St John's principle, 'Grace for (in exchange for, *δντι*) grace' (John i. 16). Solomon's prayer shews a realisation of the essential point of this later teaching, viz., the complete dependence of man on God for all mental powers.

this thy great (Heb. heavy) people] The work of an eastern king in acting as chief judge for his people is very heavy. The least of his

speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this
 11 thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked
 this thing, and hast not asked for thyself ¹long life; neither
 hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine
 12 enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to ²discern
 judgement; behold, I have done according to thy word: lo,
 I have given thee a wise and an ³understanding heart; so
 that there hath been none like thee before thee, neither after
 13 thee shall any arise like unto ⁴thee. And I have also given
 thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honour,
 so that there ⁴shall not be any among the kings like unto
 14 thee, all thy days. And if thou wilt walk in my ways, to
 keep my statutes and my commandments, as thy father

¹ Heb. *many days*

² Heb. *hear*

³ Heb. *hearing*

⁴ Or, *hath not been*

subjects has theoretically the right of appeal to his sovereign. Causes of all kinds, and not matters of life and death only, are brought before him. Appeals to the king for his decision are recorded in xx. 38—40; 1 K. ~~iii.~~ 26—29; viii. 1—6; 2 Sam. xiv. 4—8. The work was too heavy for Moses (Exod. xviii. 13—18; Num. xi. 14—17), and apparently for David, for Absalom tells the applicants that the king is doing nothing for them (2 Sam. xv. 1—4). For a vivid picture of this 'judging' in modern times see R. Kipling's Afghan story, *The Amir's Homily*, in *Life's Handicap*.

11. *judgement*] The same Heb. word is translated *cause* (marg. Or, *right*) in viii. 45. To *discern* (Heb. *hear*) *judgement* is to perceive on which side *the right* lies in a dispute which is brought before the judge.

12. *I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart*] The fruits of Solomon's wisdom may be traced in the general prosperity of his reign, and in the position he held in the eyes of the neighbouring kings of Egypt and of Tyre. That his wisdom had serious limitations, or that he decreased in wisdom as time went on, is proved by the legacy of popular discontent which he left to his son (xii. 4), and by his mistaken religious policy (xi. 4—8).

there hath been none like thee] Cp. iv. 29—34; x. 1—3.

14. *as thy father David did walk*] David shewed his faithfulness to JEHOVAH on the one hand by his care for the ark (2 Sam. vi.), and by his desire to build a Temple for the ark (2 Sam. vii.), and on the other hand by his abstinence from any worship of foreign gods. Accordingly in the book of Kings David supplies the standard by which the faithfulness of many of the kings of Judah to JEHOVAH is tested. Abijam (xv. 3), Amaziah (2 K. xiv. 3), and Ahaz (2 K. xvi. 2) fail to pass this test, while Asa (xv. 11), Hezekiah (2 K. xviii. 3), and Josiah (2 K. xxii. 2) are approved.

David did walk, then I will lengthen thy days. And 15 Solomon awoke, and, behold, it was a dream: and he came to Jerusalem, and stood before the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and offered up burnt offerings, and offered peace offerings, and made a feast to all his servants.

Then came there two women, that were harlots, unto 16 the king, and stood before him. And the one woman said, 17 Oh my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house. And it 18 came to pass the third day after I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also; and we were together; there was no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house. And this woman's child died in the night; because 19 she overlaid it. And she arose at midnight, and took my 20 son from beside me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom. And 21 when I rose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead: but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son, which I did bear. And the 22 other woman said, Nay; but the living is my son, and the dead is thy son. And this said, No; but the dead is thy son, and the living is my son. Thus they spake before

I will lengthen thy days] Solomon reigned forty years; to this large extent the promise was fulfilled to him. Cp. Prov. iii. 13, 16.

15. *stood before the ark...and offered]* This was a 'court' function, while that described in v. 4 was a popular service.

peace offerings] Peace-offerings (if we accept the interpretation of the LXX. and the E.V.) are offerings made when all is well; they are thus of the nature of a feast of rejoicing or of a thank-offering. Sometimes they were offered in fulfilment of a vow, and sometimes (it is believed) in consecration of a treaty. Cp. viii. 64; ix. 25; Gen. xxxi. 46, 54; Prov. vii. 14, and Hastings' *Dictionary*, iv. 338.

a feast] A sacrifice ended in a feast (1 Sam. i. 4). Cp. i. 9, note.

16—22. THE JUDGEMENT OF SOLOMON.

The promise of the gift of wisdom (v. 13) is naturally followed by an incident which illustrates the king's wisdom.

17. *Oh my Lord]* *Oh* (Heb. *bî*) is an exclamation of entreaty; it occurs again Gen. xlv. 18.

18. *no stranger]* No third person to bear witness.

22. *Thus they spake]* Peshitta, 'And they were contending' (a correct paraphrase).

23 the king. Then said the king, The one saith, This is my son that liveth, and thy son is the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son is the dead, and my son is the living. And the king said, Fetch me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king. And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other. Then spake the woman whose the living child was unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, Oh my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, It shall be neither mine nor thine; divide it. Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she is the mother thereof. And all Israel heard of the judgement which the king had judged; and they feared the king: for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him, to do judgement.

4 1, 2 And king Solomon was king over all Israel. And these were the princes which he had; Azariah the son of Zadok,

23. *The one saith...and the other saith*] The king's dignity is better preserved in the Heb. text than in LXX. which represents him as addressing the two wrangling women; *Thou sayest...and thou sayest.*

26. *Oh my lord*] The same expression of entreaty as in v. 17.

26. *her bowels yearned*] The 'bowels' (the lower parts of the body) were regarded by the Hebrews as the seat of the feelings, particularly of the feeling of compassion. *Yearned* is lit., 'grew hot.'

27. *Give her the living child, &c.*] LXX., 'Give the child to her who said, Give it her and in no wise slay it,' a correct expansion of the ambiguous Hebrew.

28. *the wisdom of God*] A wisdom so great that it was reckoned to be the gift of God. Cp. the phrases 'mountains of God' (for 'mighty mountains,' Ps. xxxvi. 6), and 'cedars of God' (for 'mighty cedars,' Ps. lxxx. 10). For 'wisdom' reckoned as one of the gifts of God, see Ezra vii. 25; Dan. iv. 18. Saul's understanding was enlarged when he became king; 'God gave him *another heart*' (1 Sam. x. 9).

CH. IV. 1—34. THE ORGANISATION OF SOLOMON'S KINGDOM. THE EXTENT OF HIS DOMINIONS. HIS WISDOM.

This chapter seems to be made up of several elements drawn from different sources. vv. 7—19 come apparently from a very ancient document; the geographical terms are difficult to interpret and have an archaic stamp. vv. 20—28 on the other hand contain some generalised statements, which have the appearance of having been written long after the times to which they refer. vv. 29—34 seem to be away from their true context. They might fitly follow iii. 5—15 (Solomon's prayer for

the priest; Elihoreph and Ahijah, the sons of Shisha, ³ scribes; Jehoshaphat the son of Ahilud, the ² recorder;

¹ Or, *secretaries*

² Or, *chronicler*

wisdom) or they might precede x. 1—13 as an introduction to ch. x. (the visit of the Queen of Sheba). The chapter no doubt received interpolations (e.g. v. 24) after the time of the Editor of the book.

CH. IV. 1—20. THE ORGANISATION OF SOLOMON'S KINGDOM.

Solomon's officials are here divided into two classes, the 'princes' (Heb. *sārīm*, LXX. ἀρχοντες) vv. 2—6, and the 'officers' (Heb. *niṣṣābīm*, LXX. καθεστανμένοι), vv. 7—19. The former were a kind of cabinet or executive; the latter were 'exactors' (cp. xxii. 47 where the same Heb. word is used), appointed in different provinces to raise revenue for the king.

1. *was king*] Rather, *became king*. Cp. ii. 46; 1 Chr. xxix. 23, 24. The verse glances at the rivalry of Adonijah.

2—6. On comparing this passage with the two lists of officials given in 2 Sam. viii. 16—18; xx. 23—26, we notice that one office, i.e. the command of the Cherethites and the Beethites has disappeared; and that two new offices are mentioned for the first time, i.e. the president of the officers (v. 5), and the steward of the palace (v. 6). We notice also that some offices appear to be hereditary: the sons of Shisha (=Shavsha, 1 Chr. xviii. 16, =Sheva, 2 Sam. xx. 25) become scribes or secretaries, and (perhaps we may add) Zabud the son of Nathan one of the sons of David becomes priest to Solomon. Cp. 2 Sam. viii. 18. The titles of the different offices are not sufficiently precise to enable us to tell their exact nature, but it is noteworthy that the steward of the palace, the scribe, and the recorder were still important officials in Hezekiah's reign (2 K. xviii. 18). Another list of officers is to be found in 2 K. xxv. 18, 19.

2. *Azariah the son of Zadok, the priest*] The epithet *the priest* is omitted in LXX. (B); it is a gloss referring to Zadok, not to Azariah. The division of verses is unfortunate here, for Azariah's name is to be added to those of the *scribes* given in v. 3. The names of the *priests* are given in v. 4.

3. *scribes*] Marg. 'secretaries,' i.e. secretaries of state, who conducted the king's correspondence. From 2 K. xii. 10; xviii. 18; xxii. 3, it appears that the office was one of great importance. Whether the 'scribe' (Heb. *sōphēr*, LXX. γραμματεὺς) was above the 'recorder,' is not known. Both have been compared with the 'Chancellor' of some states of modern Europe.

recorder] Marg. 'chronicler.' Heb. *māzkīr*. Two views have been taken as to the functions of this officer. According to one he was a 'chronicler,' i.e. a writer and keeper of official records. Cp. 1 Chr. xviii. 15, where LXX. has ὑπομνηματογράφος for *māzkīr*. According to

4 and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada was over the host; and
 5 Zadok and Abiathar were priests; and Azariah the son of
 Nathan was over the officers; and Zabud the son of Nathan
 6 was ¹priest, *and* the king's friend; and Ahishar was over
 the household; and Adoniram the son of Abda was over

¹ Or, *chief minister*. See 2 Sam. viii. 18.

the other view the *mazkir* (LXX. in Kings *ὑπομνησκω* or *ἀναμνησκω*) was 'the one who reminds,' i.e. the officer who brings to the king's mind the business to be transacted from day to day, the 'Chancellor' (cp. last note).

4. *over the host*] Cp. ii. 35.

and Zadok and Abiathar were priests] Abiathar was deprived early in Solomon's reign (ii. 27), but his name is mentioned for the sake of completeness.

5. *over the officers*] i.e. over the twelve officers (or 'deputies') mentioned in v. 7. Probably he was the Receiver of the revenue paid in by these.

priest, and the king's friend] 'Priest' is omitted by LXX. (B), but LXX. (A), Pesh. Targ. Vulg. have the word. It was usual for an oriental king to have a 'friend' or confidential adviser (cp. 2 Sam. xv. 37; 2 K. vii. 2) and also a priest or priests belonging to his household (cp. 2 Sam. viii. 18; xx. 26; Amos vii. 10, 13). Of such a priest the king would when necessary 'enquire of God.' In this case the offices of 'king's friend' and 'priest at court' seem to be filled by the same person. The marg., *chief minister* (for *priest*) is not likely to be right.

6. *over the household*] The proper title of this officer in later times was *sōhēn*, 'treasurer' or 'steward.' His powers as described in Isa. xxii. 21, 22 were very much like those of a grand vizier or regent. The place might be filled by the heir apparent through the incapacity (bodily or mental) of the king (2 K. xv. 5). The 'steward' was not only over the royal household, but (since the royal household stood in very close connexion with the king's tribe) also over the whole tribe of Judah. Cp. Isa. xxii. 21.

Adoniram] In xii. 18 he is called *Adoram* (in 2 Chr. x. 18, *Hadoram*). From v. 6, 18 [20, 32, Heb.] it appears that the Israelites were conscious of their own lack of skill in preparing timber and stone; it is therefore not unlikely that the overseer of Solomon's wood-cutters and quarrymen was some skilful Syrian of the district of Lebanon. His father's name (*Abda*) is Syrian (Aramaean). If *Adoniram* be identical with the *Adoram* of 2 Sam. xx. 24, he must have been an old man at the time of his assassination (xii. 18).

over the levy] See v. 13—18 (27—32, Heb.); ix. 15—22; and cp. Exod. i. 11—14. The 'levy' was a body of men raised by the king to do taskwork for his building enterprises. The work was unusually hard, and apparently unpaid, but it was of a temporary character, for

the levy. And Solomon had twelve officers over all Israel, which provided victuals for the king and his household: each man had to make provision for a month in the year. And these are their names: Ben-hur, in the hill country of Ephraim: Ben-deker, in Makaz, and in Shaalbim, and

one month in every three. The people bitterly resented it (xii. 4, 18). No doubt an attempt was made to fix the burden as far as possible on the shoulders of persons of foreign descent (ix. 20-22), but nevertheless discontent with Solomon's measures grew until the Ten Tribes seized the opportunity of Solomon's death to revolt. Other allusions to task-work are to be found in 1 Sam. viii. 12; 2 Sam. xii. 31. In the first passage, however, the reference is to agricultural work, which would not be felt to be intolerable for free men, while in 2 Sam. xii. 31, where the reference is to building, the tasks are imposed on foreigners (Ammonites), whom David had recently subdued.

7. *twelve officers*] These 'officers' (Heb. *nissabim*) were the king's 'deputies.' Cp. xxii. 47. Two were sons-in-law to Solomon (v. 11, 15). Though the number of those appointed is twelve, their districts do not correspond with the tribal divisions. The list as it stands is somewhat puzzling, and probably the text is faulty. Thus (1) no order can be detected according to which the names of the officers are arranged; (2) several of the places mentioned cannot be identified; (3) if *two* officers are mentioned in v. 19 (cp. margin), the total amounts to *thirteen*, not *twelve*. The Hebrew text varies a good deal from LXX. (B) in these verses, sometimes (it seems) for the worse.

provided victuals] The Heb. word is the same as in the latter half of the verse, *to make provision*, and as in Gen. xlv. 11, 'There will I *nourish* thee.' Taxes were collected in kind not in money. The amount of this provision is to be calculated from vv. 22, 23, and the feeling of those who contributed may be inferred from xii. 3, 4.

8. *the hill country of Ephraim*] The centre of Western Palestine is for the most part occupied by a range of lofty hills extending from the southern border of Judah to the edge of the plain of Esdrelon. This range reaches a height of 3000 ft. at Hebron, 2500 ft. at Bethlehem, about the same at Jerusalem, 2300 ft. at Shiloh, and 3000 ft. again at Mount Ebal. The southern half bore the name of the *Hill Country of Judah* (Josh. xx. 7; Luke i. 65), while the northern half as far south as Ramah and Beth-el (Jud. iv. 5) was called the *Hill Country of Ephraim*.

9. *Ben-deker*] The position of Ben-deker's district is sufficiently indicated by the mention of *Beth-shemesh*, a well-known city on the north-west of Judah close to the border of Dan (2 K. xiv. 11; Josh. xv. 10; 1 Sam. vi. 12-21). Of *Makaz* nothing is known; *Shaalbim* is mentioned (in the form *Shaalabbin*) in Josh. xix. 42 as a city of the southern Dan; *Elon-beth-hanan* is probably another city of Dan, the *Elon* of Josh. xix. 43.

- 10 Beth-shemesh, and Elon-beth-hanan: Ben-hesed, in Arubboth; to him pertained Socoh, and all the land of Hopher:
 11 Ben-abinadab, in all ¹the ²height of Dor; he had Taphath,
 12 the daughter of Solomon to wife: Baana the son of Ahilud,
 in Taanach and Megiddo, and all Beth-shean which is beside
 Zarethan, beneath Jezreel, from Beth-shean to Abel-meholah,
 13 as far as ³beyond Jokmeam: Ben-geber, in Ramoth-gilead;

¹ Or, *Naphath-dor*

² Or, *region*

³ Or, *over against*

10. *Ben-hesed*] The position of his district is defined by the mention of *Socoh* (1 Sam. xvii. 1) in S. W. Judah. This town was sometimes reckoned to the *Shephelah* or Lowland (Josh. xv. 35) and sometimes to the Hill Country of Judah (Josh. xv. 48), being situated on the line, which separates the two. Of *Arubboth* and the *land of Hopher* nothing is known. Ben-hesed's district was in the south of Judah.

11. *the height of Dor*] Marg. *the region of Dor*; Heb. *Naphath-dor*. The writer means perhaps a district bordering on *Dor* (the modern *Tantura*), which was an important town on the Mediterranean a little to the south of Mount Carmel. Cp. Josh. xi. 2; xii. 23. This district would embrace part of the fertile plain of Sharon. It is less probable that the writer means the neighbourhood of *En-dor* ('the Spring of Dor'), a town on the north of the great plain of Jezreel behind the *Jebel Dahi*.

12. *Baana*] His district consisted of the great plain of Jezreel and part of the Jordan Valley.

Taanach] The modern *Ta'anak* on the south side of the plain of Jezreel (Josh. xvii. 11; Jud. i. 27; v. 19). The site has been excavated by an Austrian savant, Dr Sellin. The results are summarized in the *P. E. F. Quarterly Statement* for 1906, pages 115 ff.

Megiddo] The most important city in Baana's district, probably the modern *Lejjun* north-west of Taanach. Cp. Josh. xii. 21; xvii. 11; Jud. i. 27; v. 19. In ix. 15 it is said that Solomon fortified Megiddo. Ahaziah of Judah died of his wounds there (2 K. ix. 27), and there too Josiah was slain by Pharaoh-necoh (2 K. xxiii. 29).

all Beth-shean] i.e. Beth-shean and its district. Beth-shean (or Beth-shan) was situated at the east end of the valley of Jezreel just where that valley becomes merged in the Jordan valley. Cp. Josh. xvii. 11, 16; 1 Sam. xxxi. 10.

Zarethan] Cp. vii. 46; Josh. iii. 16.

Jezreel] See note on xviii. 45.

Abel-meholah] Elisha was a native of the place. Cp. xix. 16, note.

beyond Jokmeam] Jokmeam is still unidentified.

13. *Ramoth-gilead*] Also called *Ramath-gilead*. This was one of the most important of the Israelite cities east of Jordan. It was a city of refuge (Deut. iv. 43; Josh. xx. 8), the seat of a governor (so here), a prize contended for between Israel and Syria (xxii. 3; 2 K. viii. 28),

to him *pertained* the towns of Jair the son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead; *even* to him *pertained* the region of Argob, which is in Bashan, threescore great cities with walls and brasen bars: Ahinadab the son of Iddo, in Mahanaim: 14 Ahimaaz, in Naphtali; he also took Basemath the daughter 15

¹ Or, *Havvoth-jair*

and the scene of Jehu's revolt (2 K. ix. 1). Its name ('Heights' or 'Height of Gilead') suggests that it occupied a commanding position. Its site, however, cannot be identified with any confidence. Two sites about 30 miles distant from each other have been suggested; the first at (or close to) *es-Salt* is shewn on most maps, but the second a good deal to the north-east at *Remtheh* on the modern pilgrim road from Damascus to Mecca has a strong claim to be considered. Cp. G. A. Smith, *Historical Geography* (ed. 3), pp. 583—587, who remarks, 'In all Syria sites are nowhere less fixed than in Gilead.'

to him pertained...even to him pertained] Omit 'even.' In the Hebrew no conjunction is used, and the passage reads:—

'to him pertained the towns (*Havvoth*) of Jair the son of Manasseh, which are in Gilead';

'to him pertained the region of Argob, which is in Bashan.'

The two statements are distinct, one being probably meant as a correction of the other, for *Bashan* is the name of the northern part of Eastern Palestine, while *Gilead* means the southern part, and moreover no sufficient reason can be shewn for identifying the *region of Argob* with the *towns of Jair*. This identification rests chiefly on Deut. iii. 14, the text of which is undoubtedly corrupt. Thus in the present passage we have to choose between the statement that Ben-geber's district was to the north (*the region of Argob*) and the statement that it was to the south of this (*the towns of Jair*). Cp. G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography* (ed. 3), pp. 551 f.

the towns of Jair] Marg. *Havvoth-jair*. These are reckoned at thirty in number in Jud. x. 4, and at twenty-three in 1 Chr. ii. 22, but (when 'Kenath and the villages thereof' are also included) at threescore in 1 Chr. ii. 23. The name *Havvoth-jair* (Arab. *hivā*, 'a collection of tents') perhaps implies that these towns were originally tent-villages of the nomads.

with walls and brasen bars] In Deut. iii. 5, 'with high walls, gates, and bars.' The bars with which the city gates were secured were of 'brass,' or rather of bronze. Cp. vii. 14, note.

14. *Mahanaim*] Another important city east of Jordan of uncertain situation. Cp. note on ii. 8. Here out of reach of the Philistines Ish-bosheth the son of Saul was made king after the battle of Gilboa (2 Sam. ii. 8), and here David rested in his flight and gathered strength to overthrow the forces of Absalom (2 Sam. xvii. 27).

15. *Ahimaaz*] Perhaps, as his father's name is not mentioned, the well-known person, the son of Zadok, mentioned in 2 Sam. xv. 27, 36; xvii. 17—21; xviii. 19—29.

16 of Solomon to wife: Baana the son of Hushai, in Asher
 17 and ¹Bealoth: Jehoshaphat the son of Paruah, in Issachar:
 18 Shimei the son of Ela, in Benjamin: Geber the son of Uri,
 19 in the land of Gilead, the country of Sihon king of the
 Amorites and of Og king of Bashan; ²and *he was* the only
 20 officer which was in the land. Judah and Israel were many,
 as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and
 drinking and making merry.

¹ Or, *in Aloth*

² Heb. *and one officer*

he also] Cp. v. 11.

16. *Hushai*] Perhaps *Hushai the Archite* the counsellor of David
 (2 Sam. xv. 32—37; xvi. 16—19; xvii. 5—16).

in Asher] Corresponding with the 'in Naphtali' of v. 15, and the
 'in Issachar' of v. 17.

Bealoth] Unknown, but LXX. reads *in Maala*, which probably
 means 'in the Ascent,' i.e. in the hilly country north of Asher which
 rises into the Lebanon range.

17. *in Issachar*] The plain of Esdrelon which forms a large part of
 Issachar is assigned in v. 12 to 'Baana the son of Ahilud.' Some
 maps shew an extension of Issachar southward along the Jordan
 valley, and this extension may have been the province of Jeho-
 shaphat.

18. *the son of Ela*] Thereby distinguished from Shimei son of
 Gera (v. 8).

19. *Geber the son of Uri*] Two officers whose districts were east of
 Jordan have already been mentioned in vv. 13, 14; Geber had perhaps
 the remaining parts of Eastern Palestine.

and he was the only officer] Better as marg., and *one officer*. The
 sentence has been conjecturally restored thus, *and one officer was over*
all the officers which were in the land. Cp. v. 5.

20. THE PROSPERITY OF ISRAEL.

This verse according to the Hebrew division of chapters is the *last*
 verse of ch. iv. The text of LXX. (B) at this point differs in order from
 the Heb. text, this verse and the next (=v. 1 of the Hebrew) being
 given immediately after ii. 46, while (very appropriately) vv. 27, 28 are
 made to follow v. 19.

Judah and Israel] Cp. v. 25, which gives the sense of this verse in
 different words.

eating and drinking] The words describe a state of plenty or of
 satisfaction, not of riot. Cp. Isa. xxv. 6—8; Luke xxii. 30; 1 Cor.
 ix. 4.

and making merry] Or, *rejoicing*. Cp. Deut. xvi. 14.

And Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the 21
River unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border
of Egypt: they brought presents, and served Solomon all
the days of his life. And Solomon's provision for one day 22
was thirty ¹measures of fine flour, and threescore measures
of meal; ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, 23
and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and gazelles, and
roebucks, and fatted fowl. For he had dominion over all 24
the region ²on this side the River, from Tiphseh even to

¹ Heb. *côr*² Or, *beyond the River*

21—28 (CH. V. 1—8 Heb.). PARTICULARS CONCERNING SOLOMON'S
REVENUE AND THE EXTENT OF HIS DOMINION.

This passage consists of three elements. We have (1) *vv.* 22, 23 and 27, 28 which form a sequel to the list of officers given in *vv.* 7—19, (2) *v.* 26 which gives the number of Solomon's horses, and (3) *vv.* 21, 24, 25, which describe in general terms (similar to those used in *v.* 20) the extent and the prosperity of Solomon's dominions. The order of verses in LXX. is worthy of attention since the Heb. text seems to be in confusion. The Greek order is (1) *vv.* 27, 28, immediately following *v.* 19, (2) *vv.* 22, 23, (3) *v.* 24 in a shortened form.

21. *the River*] Heb. *the nâhâr*, i.e. the Euphrates which was called in Heb. *the river Pârath*, *the great river*, or (frequently) simply, *the River*.

brought presents] A 'present' was usually a form of tribute; it was given once or many times, regularly or irregularly according to the degree of dependence in which a smaller king stood to a greater one. Cp. 2 K. xv. 19; xvi. 7, 8; xvii. 3, 4; xviii. 14—16. Sometimes, however, a 'present' was simply a sign of amity. Cp. 2 K. xx. 12.

22. *measures*] Heb. *côr*. Cp. v. 11 [*v.* 25 Heb.]; 2 Chr. ii. 10. It is commonly held that the *côr* was equivalent to the *hômér*, which was equivalent to ten *baths* according to Ezek. xlv. 11. Of the *bath* Josephus (*Antiq.* VIII. 57) writes, 'The bath contains seventy-two *Xestæ*.' According to this, since the *Xestes* (i.e. the Roman *sextarius*) corresponded to our *pint*, the *bath* contained 72 pints (= 9 gallons) and the *côr* 90 gallons.

23. *oxen out of the pastures*] So described to distinguish them from *stalled* or *fatted* oxen. Cp. Prov. xv. 17; Luke xv. 23.

fatted fowl] *Fowl* is used here in its old English sense, in which it is applied to any bird. Some have thought that *geese* are meant. With Solomon's provision of thirty oxen and a hundred sheep we may compare Nehemiah's 'one ox and six choice sheep' (Neh. v. 17, 18). The latter was intended for 150 persons; at the same rate Solomon's table would suffice for 4000 or 5000.

24. *on this side*] Better as marg., *beyond*. By describing Palestine and the adjacent lauds as 'beyond the river,' i.e. 'on the other side of

Gaza, over all the kings ¹on this side the River: and he had
 25 peace ²on all sides round about him. And Judah and
 Israel dwelt safely, every man under his vine and under his
 fig tree, from Dan even to Beer-sheba, all the days of
 26 Solomon. And Solomon had ³forty thousand stalls of

¹ Or, *beyond the River* ² Some authorities read, *with all his servants*
³ In 2 Chr. ix. 25, *four thousand*.

the Euphrates,' the writer of this verse shews that he himself lived east of the Euphrates; he was perhaps one of the Babylonian exiles.

Tiphshah] A place mentioned only in this one passage (unless the Tiphshah of 2 K. xv. 16 be the same place); the name means perhaps *ford* or *crossing*. It is probably to be identified with Thapsacus, a town in northern Syria on the Euphrates, situated at a well-known crossing-place (Xenophon, *Anab.* i. 4).

Gaza] One of the five cities of the Philistines, situated in the extreme south-west of Palestine. 'The town is of semi-Egyptian character; ... From time immemorial Gaza has formed the connecting link between Egypt and Syria, and to this day, although the caravan traffic is almost extinct, its market is not unimportant.' Whether the modern inland town of 16,000 inhabitants occupies the site of the ancient town is uncertain. There is abundance of water, and the vegetation is rich. See Baedeker, *Palestine*, pp. 154 ff.

peace on all sides] For exceptions to this general statement see xi. 14—25. The statement of the margin, 'Some authorities read, *with all his servants*' is incorrect. Some Heb. MSS. read, *from all his servants*, but the reading yields no satisfactory sense, and is probably a mere error. In the Hebrew the difference is one of a single letter.

26. *under his own vine &c.*] A suitable symbol of peace. Cp. Deut. xx. 6; Mic. iv. 4.

from Dan even to Beer-sheba] i.e. from the northern to the southern extremity of the land. Dan is probably to be identified with *Tell-el-Kadi*, a mound (rising some thirty or forty feet above the plain) to the north of lake Huleh and a little to the west of Baniás (Caesarea Philippi). Beer-sheba is represented by *Bir-es-seba* a site to the south-east of Gaza on an ancient road leading from Hebron into Egypt. It is on the very edge of the desert.

26. *And Solomon had &c.*] This statement is preserved in three different forms, as follows:—

(a) 1 K. x. 26
 = 2 Chr. i. 14.

And he had
 1400
 chariots

(b) 2 Chr. ix. 25.

And Solomon had
 4000
 'stalls' of horses and
 chariots

(c) 1 K. iv. 26
 [v. 6 Heb.].

And Solomon had
 40,000
 'stalls' of horses for
 his chariot
 (or chariots)

horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen. And those officers provided victual for king Solomon, and 27 for all that came unto king Solomon's table, every man in his month: they let nothing be lacking. Barley also and 28 straw for the horses and swift steeds brought they unto the place ¹where *the officers* were, every man according to his charge.

And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding 29 exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore. And Solomon's wisdom excelled 30 the wisdom of all the children of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than 31

¹ Or, *where he* (that is, the king) *was* Or, *where it should be*

In each case the statement is completed by the words 'and 12,000 horsemen.' The choice between (b) and (c) is not difficult to make. The number given in the former (4000) is decidedly more probable than the 40,000 given in 1 K. iv. 26, especially if (as seems probable) a 'stall' of horses means a pair. It is more difficult to decide between (a) and (b). 1400 can hardly be regarded as a great number, unless indeed we may conclude from 2 Sam. viii. 4 that David was content with 100 chariots. Sisera had 900 chariots (Jud. iv. 3), and Ahab (according to an inscription of Shalmaneser II.) despatched as many as 2000 to take part in the battle of Karkar in 854 B.C. On the other hand it is more probable that the definite number 1400 was corrupted in the course of transcription into 4000 than *vice versa*. The balance of probability inclines towards the shorter reading, i.e. that of 1 K. x. 26.

27. *those officers*] Rather, *these officers*. Cp. v. 7—19.

28. *swift steeds*] The Heb. word is used also in Esth. viii. 10, 14; Mic. i. 13.

where the officers were] Better as marg., *where he* (that is, the king) *was*.

29—31. SOLOMON'S WISDOM.

29. *God gave*] Cp. iii. 5—12.

largeness of heart] i.e. largeness of understanding, the heart being according to the Hebrews the seat of mental qualities. Cp. iii. 9, 'an understanding heart.'

30. *the wisdom of all the children of the east*] Such as Balaam (Num. xxii. 5), Job and his friends (Job i. 3; ii. 11; xxxii. 2), the Chaldeans (Isa. xlvii. 10), the Magi (Matt. ii. 1).

the wisdom of Egypt] Cp. Gen. xli. 8; Isa. xix. 3, 12; Acts vii. 22.

Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all the nations
 32 round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs: and
 33 his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop

31. *Ethan the Ezrahite*] The four names given in this verse appear in 1 Chr. ii. 6 as the sons of Zerach (=the Ezrahites), except that the Heb. of Chron. has *Dara* for *Darda*. (*Darda* however is read in Chron. by Vulg. Targ. Pesh.) Nothing is known of these men, but Psalms lxxxviii. and lxxxix. bear respectively the names of *Heman the Ezrahite* and *Ethan the Ezrahite*. They are compared with Solomon perhaps as writers of divine songs. Cp. v. 32.

the sons of Mahol] Nothing is known of any person named *Mahol*, nor is it certain that *Mahol* is a proper name. The Heb. word means a 'dance,' and the expression 'Sons of Mahol' may mean those who took part in or presided over a religious dance, at which Psalms were sung. Cp. Exod. xv. 20, 21; Ps. cxlix. 3; cl. 4.

• 32. *three thousand proverbs*] It can hardly be doubted that many of these proverbs are to be found in the book of Proverbs. Most scholars, it is true, agree that that book *as it stands*, is not the work of Solomon, and that the title (Prov. i. 1) is insufficient to prove his authorship of the whole work. But on the other hand it is clear from Prov. x. 1; xxv. 1 that smaller collections of proverbs, ascribed to Solomon, existed before our present book, and that they were taken into it, and that at least as early as the days of Hezekiah Solomon had the reputation of a composer of proverbs. This is strong evidence not lightly to be set aside. The mention of a large number ('three thousand') suggests that the writer of Kings is thinking of short sayings such as those of Prov. x. ff., not of connected discourses such as those of Prov. i.—lx.

his songs] The book called 'The Song of Songs' (R.V.), or 'The Song of Solomon' (A.V.), is supposed by most scholars to have been composed not earlier than the fourth or fifth century B.C. If so, it is useless to speculate whether it contains any song or songs of the king of Israel. The book may have been called by his name only because he is mentioned in i. 5; iii. 7—11; viii. 11, 12.

a thousand and five] Two explanations may be given of this precise number. (1) It may be a way of saying, 'Over a thousand.' (2) It may have been the title of a book of songs. Cp. such titles as, the *Thousand and One Nights*, the *Alfīyāh* ('the thousand verses,' name of a mediæval Arabic grammar).

33. *he spake*] Probably the writer means that Solomon drew the comparisons of which his proverbs consisted from the animal and vegetable world. Cp. Prov. xxvi. 2, 3; xxvii. 8; xxx. 15, 17; 19; 24—31.

the cedar that is in Lebanon] Cp. v. 6 [v. 20, Heb.]; vi. 9, 10, 15; vii. 2, 3; 2 K. xix. 23; Jer. xxii. 13—15; Ezek. xxvii. 5; Amos ii. 9.

that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom.

And Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants unto Solomon; for, he had heard that they had anointed him

The cedar, which grew just outside the proper confines of Palestine, was the tallest tree and supplied the most valuable timber known to the Hebrews. It was used for masts, beams, and panelling, as the foregoing references shew. 'Portions of cedar beams from...Nineveh, now in the British Museum, have been pronounced to be genuine Lebanon cedar' (W. Houghton, *Camb. Companion to the Bible*, p. 529). These beams must be over 2500 years old.

the hyssop] Probably *Origanum Maru*, a species of marjoram, which has straight slender stalks with small heads, and grows in clefts of rocks and in chinks of old walls (G. E. Post in *Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible*, li. 442).

34. *of all peoples*] Cp. x. 1 ff.

CH. V. 1—18 (15—32, Heb.). SOLOMON'S COMPACT WITH HIRAM.

Tyre was at this time the chief city of the Phoenicians, whose territory stretched along the coast of Syria for 120 miles from *Acco* (Jud. i. 31), the modern *Acre*, the *Ptolemais* of Acts xxi. 7, in the south to *Gedal*, the Classical *Byblus*, in the north. Other cities were *Zidon* and *Arvad*, the Classical *Aradus*. All these cities had their own kings, but in the days of David and Solomon they were united in a confederacy under the king of Tyre. The Phoenicians are usually called in the Old Testament *Zidonians* (see xvi. 31; Deut. iii. 9; Jud. iii. 3), *Zidon* having been the leading city, before Tyre rose to the pre-eminence (Gen. x. 15).

The advantages which Israel drew from friendship with the *Zidonians* were connected partly with commerce and with the construction of buildings, and partly with politics. Hiram sent cedar-wood and craftsmen for the building of David's palace (2 Sam. v. 11), and at a later time he furnished Solomon with materials ready prepared for the Temple (vv. 6, 10, 17, 18) and with the services of a skilled worker in brass (vii. 13, 14). Further it is reasonable to suppose that Ahab's 'ivory house,' i.e. house decorated with ivory, was built with *Zidonian* help, for Ahab was the son-in-law of the *Zidonian* king (xvi. 31), and inlay-work of ivory was used in building the Tyrian galleys (Ezek. xxvii. 6). Politically it was an advantage to Israel when engaged in hostilities with *Damascus* (as was the case under David, Solomon, and Ahab) to be freed from the danger of an attack in the rear on the part of the *Zidonians*.

ing in the room of his father: for Hiram was ever a lover of David. And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying, Thou knowest how that David my father could not build an house for the name of the LORD his God for the wars which were about him on every side, until the LORD put them under the soles of his feet. But now the LORD my God hath given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary, nor evil occurrent. And, behold, I purpose to build an house

1 [15 Heb.]. HIRAM'S EMBASSY TO SOLOMON.

Hiram] In *vv.* 10, 18 the name is written *Hiram*, and in Chron. (*passim*) *Huram*. LXX. gives *Χειράμ* both in Kings and Chron. Josephus calls him *Ελρωμος* or *Ελρωμος* (*Antiq.* VIII. 51—58, 141—149). A later king of the same name appears on a monument of Tiglath-pileser III. as *Hirūm*. In Phœnician the name is written simply with the three consonants HRM. *Hiram* seems to be nearest to the true pronunciation.

sent his servants] The embassy was perhaps one of condolence on the death of David. Cp. 2 Sam. x. 2. LXX. (B) has the extraordinary reading 'sent his servants...to anoint Solomon,' as though Solomon were his vassal.

a lover of David] Cp. 2 Sam. v. 11 (= 1 Chr. xiv. 1).

2—9 [16—23 Heb.] (= 2 Chr. ii. 3—16). SOLOMON'S MESSAGE AND HIRAM'S ANSWER.

According to Josephus, *Antiq.* VIII. 55, copies of this correspondence were preserved in his day in the Tyrian archives.

3. *for the wars*] The meaning seems to be that David was so fully occupied with his wars, that his hands were not free for so great an undertaking as the building of a temple. In 1 Chr. xxii. 8 however a different turn is given to the mention of these wars; David as a man of blood was not allowed to build a house to JEHOVAH. In 2 Sam. vii. 4 ff. yet another view is expressed: *The hour was not yet come; not David, but David's descendant, should build JEHOVAH's house.*

4. *rest on every side*] Cp. lv. 24, note; also 1 Chr. xxii. 9, 'A son shall be born to thee (David), who shall be a man of rest.'

occurrent] i.e. 'occurrence, chance' (Eccl. ix. 11, the same Heb. word used). LXX. (A), *ἀπάντημα*, 'something that meets one.'

5. *an house for the name of the LORD*] The word *house* answers to the early idea according to which a temple was a dwelling-place for a deity, and not merely a place where the deity was worshipped. Cp. viii. 13. On the other hand the expression 'for the name of JEHOVAH' (instead of 'for JEHOVAH') softens the bold anthropomorphism of the expression.

for the name of the LORD my God, as the LORD spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build the house for my name. Now therefore command thou that they hew me 6 cedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants; and I will give thee hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt say: for thou knowest that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Zidonians. And it came to pass, when Hiram 7 heard the words of Solomon; that he rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed be the LORD this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people. And Hiram sent 8 to Solomon, saying, I have heard *the message* which thou hast sent unto me: I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of ¹fir. My servants 9 shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea: and I will make them into rafts to go by sea unto the place that thou shalt appoint me, and will cause them to be broken up there, and thou shalt ²receive them: and thou shalt accomplish *my* desire, in giving food for my household. So ³Hiram gave Solomon timber of cedar and timber of fir 10

¹ Or, *cypress*² Or, *carry them away*³ Heb. *Hirom*, and in ver. 18.

as the LORD spake unto David] Cp. viii. 15—19; 2 Sam. vii. 13 f.

6. *skill to hew*] i.e. understand how to hew. Cp. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 13, 'all that could skill of instruments of music'; and Beaumont and Fletcher, *Love's Cure*, li. 2 (near end), 'I skill not what it is' (W. W. Skeat, *Camb. Companion to the Bible*, p. 555).

Zidonians] See the introductory note to this chapter.

7. *he rejoiced greatly*] The Phœnicians, like the British at the present day, were dependent on foreign corn; amity with Solomon meant freedom from anxiety about the food supply of Tyre. Cp. v. 9; Acts xii. 20. The fertile plain of Esdrelon lay within Israelite territory, yet at the very gates of Phœnicia.

9. *the place that thou shalt appoint me*] According to 2 Chr. ii. 16 the place was to be Joppa. Similarly according to Ezra iii. 7 cedar-wood for the Second Temple was brought from Lebanon by sea to Joppa.

receive them] Better as marg., *carry them away*.

food] Heb. *lehem*, 'bread,' as in xviii. 13; xxii. 27, where 'bread' is used in the general sense of 'food.' See Ezek. xxvii. 17, 'Judah and the land of Israel...traded for thy merchandise wheat of Minnith,... and honey, and oil, and balm.'

- 11 according to all his desire. And Solomon gave Hiram twenty thousand ¹measures of wheat for food to his household, and twenty measures of ²pure oil: thus gave Solomon to
 12 Hiram year by year. And the LORD gave Solomon wisdom, as he promised him; and there was peace between Hiram and Solomon; and they two made a league together.
 13 ³And king Solomon raised a levy out of all Israel; and

¹ Heb. *cor*

² Or, *beaten*

10—12 [24—26, Heb.] (cp. 2 Chr. ii. 10). SOLOMON'S LEAGUE WITH HIRAM.

11. *measures*] Heb. *cōr*; see iv. 22, note.

to his household] The Chronicler in the parallel passage adds, 'and twenty thousand measures of barley,' and it is possible that the words are original and have fallen out of the text of Kings through *homoteleuton*. It must however be noted that if we accept the Chronicler's reckoning of 40,000 measures of grain, the total exceeds that of Solomon's provision for his own household, which amounted by the year (cp. iv. 22) to 32,850 measures (*cōr*).

twenty measures] Heb. (with which Vulg. agrees) 'twenty *cor*': The Chronicler says 'twenty thousand bathis,' i.e. a hundred times as much, since ten *bathis* went to a *cōr*. With this LXX. of Kings agrees.

pure oil] Marg. *beaten oil*, i.e. oil as it was beaten out of the olive. For the process see article OLIVE in Hastings' *Dictionary*, iii. 616.

13—18 [27—32, Heb.] (cp. 2 Chr. ii. 17, 18). SOLOMON'S WORKMEN AND LABOURERS. THE NUMBER OF THEM. THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE TEMPLE LAID.

This passage records *two* levies, one of 30,000 Israelites, who served for a limited time (vv. 13, 14), and another, of 150,000 men, whose service seems to have been permanent, who were probably non-Israelites (v. 15, cp. ix. 15, 20, 21).

18. *a levy*] Cp. iv. 6, note; ix. 15. A stèle of Rameses IV. (circ. 1171—1165 B.C.) gives an account of a levy made by the Egyptian king some two centuries before Solomon. The men were sent to the quarries, and part of their work was to make 'a road, and a site for a temple, under the high priest of Amen and chief architect Ramessu-nekhtu; 170 officials, 5000 soldiers, 200 fishermen (to procure food in the Red Sea), 800 Bedawin, 2000 civil service men, 50 police, [an] artist, 3 architects, 130 masons, 2 draftsmen, 4 sculptors. Out of the total of 8368 men, 900 died in the journey. Ten carts, each drawn by six yoke of oxen, formed the baggage train.' Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt*, vol. III., pp. 168 f.

the levy was thirty thousand men. And he sent them to 14
Lebanon, ten thousand a month by courses: a month they
were in Lebanon, and two months at home: and Adoniram
was over the levy. And Solomon had threescore and ten 15
thousand that bare burdens, and fourscore thousand that
were hewers in the mountains; besides Solomon's chief 16
officers that were over the work, three thousand and three
hundred, which bare rule over the people that wrought
in the work. And the king commanded, and they ¹hewed 17
out great stones, costly stones, to lay the foundation of the

¹ Or, brought away

out of all Israel] These words make it quite clear that Solomon imposed task-work on his own people, though the majority of his workers were no doubt foreigners. In ix. 20-22 it is said 'Of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondmen,' but this statement means merely that Solomon did not reduce any of his own people to permanent bondage. The native Israelites however felt the *levy* to be grievous bondage: see xii. 4.

15. *threescore and ten thousand...and fourscore thousand*] These were no doubt partly Zidonians, partly (cp. ix. 20, 21) non-Israelite inhabitants of Canaan.

hewers in the mountains] i.e. in the hill-country of Judah where good stone is to be had.

16. *chief officers*] The number of these is variously stated, thus:—

(a) in connexion with the mention of the bearers and hewers,

	1 K. v. 16.	=	2 Ch. ii. 18.
Heb.	LXX.		Heb. LXX.
3300	3600		3600 3600

(b) mentioned apart from the bearers and hewers,

	1 K. ix. 23.	=	2 Chr. viii. 10.
Heb.	LXX. (A)		Heb. LXX.
550	550		250 250.

It is not possible with our present knowledge to reconcile these different accounts or even to assure ourselves that they all refer to the same body of officers.

17. *hewed out*] A.V. *brought*, i.e. 'transported.' The word suggests effort in bringing these massive stones from the quarry. The quarries were probably near Jerusalem, where there is abundance of good building stone.

great stones, costly stones] Perrot and Chipiez, *Art. in Phœnicia*, vol. I. 107 f., point out that the Syrian and Phœnician builders loved to make a great show with huge blocks of stone. Stones 'of ten cubits' and 'of eight cubits' respectively are mentioned as foundation stones in vii. 10. An ancient wall at Arvad, in northern Phœnicia, is composed of stones 'ten feet high and from about twelve to sixteen feet

18 house with wrought stone. And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders and the Gebalites did fashion them, and prepared the timber and the stones to build the house.

long' (quoted from Renan's *Mission de Phénicie*). At Baalbek the three stones which crown the platform of the Temple of the Sun are respectively 63 feet, 60 feet, and 64 feet long. Josephus, speaking of the wall of the Jewish Temple of his own day, writes, 'The building had stones of the size of forty cubits' (*B. J. v. 5. 1*). See also Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, article WALLS (by Sir C. Warren).

18. *the Gebalites*] Gebal (called Byblus by the Greeks) was a city on the Phœnician coast, to the north of Beyrout. Its former importance is still visibly attested by the number and size of the rock-hewn tombs found in and around it. An inscription of one of its kings, belonging to the fourth or fifth century B.C., has been found, recording his devotion to the 'Lady of Gebal,' i.e. probably *Astarte*, in whose honour he had erected an altar of 'brass.' 'There,' write Perrot and Chipiez, 'religious sentiment seems to have played a more important part than anywhere else in Phœnicia' (*Art in Phœnicia*, l. 23).

did fashion them, and prepared] Cp. vi. 7. LXX. adds that these preparations occupied three years (a deduction from vi. 1, 'in the fourth year of Solomon's reign').

CHS. VI., VII. SOLOMON'S BUILDINGS.

Two whole chapters, eighty-nine verses in all, are devoted to the buildings which Solomon erected and to the vessels with which he furnished them. In vi. 1—14, 36—38 the erection of the Temple is narrated, and its general structure is described; in *vv.* 15—35 a description is given of the inner arrangements and the decorations; while in vii. 13—51 the story of the sacred vessels of gold and of brass is told. The intervening passage, vii. 1—12, describes summarily the rest of Solomon's buildings: (a) his own house, *v.* 8; (b) the House of the forest of Lebanon, *vv.* 2—5; (c) the 'Porch of pillars,' *v.* 6; (d) the Porch of judgement, *v.* 7; (e) the House for Pharaoh's daughter, *v.* 8.

Of these buildings, the House of Lebanon certainly, and Solomon's own House probably, were of larger dimensions than the Temple. The Temple was only one, and not the largest, of the group of royal buildings which made up 'Solomon's House' in the full sense of the term. The Temple was the King's Chapel (sanctuary), just as in later times Beth-el was the chapel of the ruler of the Northern Kingdom (*Amos* vii. 13). To the editor of Kings, however, the building and furnishing of the House of the LORD was the one important theme. His book is the Chronicle of the Temple as well as of the Heb. people. See 2 K. xi., xii.; xvi. 10—18; xviii. 16; xxi. 4, 5, 7; xxii. 3—xxiii. 7; xxv. 9, 13—17.

Chr. VI. 1—10 (cp. 2 Chr. iii. 1—4; Ezek. xl. 48, 49; xli. 2, 4, 6).
 THE BUILDING OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE; ITS MEASUREMENTS.

This description of the building of the Temple is one of the most obscure passages in the Old Testament. The Hebrews were neither skilled architects nor practised writers on architecture. Many particulars are omitted which would have helped us to form an idea of the building. Even the site is not defined. (According to 2 Chr. iii. 1, it was the threshing-floor of Ornan on Mount Moriah.) The court of the Temple is not mentioned till v. 36, where however nothing is said about its shape or size. The thickness of the walls is not given, though this is an important measurement, if we rightly conclude from Ezek. xli. 5 that it was as great (in so small a building) as six cubits, i.e. nearly nine feet. A further cause of the obscurity of this passage lies in the fact that the text is marred by several faulty readings.

From Josephus little or no help is to be gained. The Temple which he knew was the Second Temple as it stood after Herod's restoration. The Jewish writer was like us dependent on the text of Kings and Chronicles. Our best help towards understanding this text lies in the existing remains of Egyptian temples. Solomon was directly under Egyptian influence through his wife (iii. 1), and indirectly through his Phœnician craftsmen (v. 18; vii. 13 ff.), who in art were pupils of the Egyptians. The following brief description of a typical Egyptian temple reminds us not a little of Solomon's:

'Behind a forecourt open to the sky rose a colonnaded hall, beyond which was a series of small chambers containing the furniture and implements for the temple services. The central chamber in the rear was occupied by a small room, the holy of holies, in which stood a shrine hewn from one block of granite. It contained the image of the god' (from Breasted, *History of Egypt*, page 61).

Solomon's Temple stood in a court called the 'inner court' (vii. 12), to distinguish it from the 'great court,' which enclosed the whole group of royal buildings. The Temple consisted of a roofed hall, divided into two apartments, the outer and larger called the 'house' or 'temple' or 'holy place' (vi. 3, 17), the inner and smaller called the 'oracle' or 'most holy place' (vi. 19, 20). Before this hall stood a gateway or porch (*pylon*, in Heb. *ulam*), after the fashion of Egyptian temples. After the same fashion the temple buildings decreased in height from front to rear, i.e. from east to west, the pylon being 120 cubits in height (2 Chr. iii. 4), the outer hall 30 cubits, and the inner shrine 20 cubits (1 K. vi. 2, 20). There were side-chambers (v. 5), in which presumably the priests and the attendants lived and made preparations for the services. The house was built of stone (v. 7), lined with cedar, and decorated with carvings of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, the last perhaps being the lotus, a favourite decoration with Egyptian artists (vv. 18, 29). A very little light was admitted into the building by windows of lattice work—stone gratings—probably placed high up just under the roof, as in Egyptian temples (v. 4). Solomon's temple

6 And it came to pass in the four hundred and eightieth year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month Ziv, which is the second month, that he
 2 began to build the house of the LORD. And the house which king Solomon built for the LORD, the length thereof was threescore cubits, and the breadth thereof twenty cubits,
 3 and the height thereof thirty cubits. And the porch before

¹ Heb. *built*

was a relatively small building, about 90 feet long, 30 feet broad, and 45 feet high, but neither its small size nor its darkness was any drawback, for all congregational worship was performed in the open air in the court or courts.

1. *in the four hundred and eightieth year*] i.e. twelve generations (of forty years) after the Exodus. LXX. 'in the four hundred and fortieth year,' i.e. eleven generations after the same event. No date at all is given in Chron., and it has been maintained (e.g. by Wellhausen) that the earlier form of the narrative of Kings contained no further note of date than that given in vi. 37, 38. In any case it would be unsafe to take the 480 years as the basis of any exact calculations; 'a dozen generations' is a round number. Josephus (*Antiq.* VIII. 61) says '592 years after the Exodus.'

the month Ziv] Cp. v. 37. This name is not found elsewhere. Josephus (*ut supra*) writes, 'in the second month.'

which is the second month] Corresponding to part of April with part of May. The Hebrew sacred year began in the spring. Cp. 2 K. xxv. 3, note. In 2 K. xxiii. 23 (see note) another reckoning seems to be followed, according to which the year began in the autumn.

the house] This consisted of the 'temple' (Heb. *hēykāl*) or *holy place* together with the 'oracle' (Heb. *dēbīr*) or *most holy place*. For the term *house* cp. v. 5 note, and Haggai ii. 3, 7, 9.

2. *the length thereof &c.*] All these seem to be inside measurements.

cubits] The cubit (Heb. *ammāh*, LXX. and Josephus *πῆχυς*) meant the distance from the elbow to the tip of the fingers. The reckoning varied at different times. Here the *ammāh* is to be reckoned at about 17½ inches.

thirty cubits] This height was not maintained throughout. On the one hand the 'oracle' was only twenty cubits (v. 20), on the other the 'porch' (2 Chr. iii. 4) was a hundred and twenty.

3. *the porch*] the gateway. τὸ πρὸ πυλῶν, Symmachus. The Hebrew word *ūlām* (left untranslated by the LXX.) probably means a great gateway not attached to the 'House' itself, but belonging to the outer wall which surrounded the temple domain. Such an *ūlām* is described in Ezek. xl. 9. Cp. Ezek. xl. 5. It was not itself a portico

'the temple of the house, twenty cubits was the length thereof, according to the breadth of the house; and ten cubits was the breadth thereof before the house. And for 4 the house he made 2 windows of fixed lattice-work. And 5 against the wall of the house he built stories round about, against the walls of the house round about, both of the temple and of 3 the oracle: and he made side-chambers round about: the nethermost story was five cubits broad, 6 and the middle was six cubits broad, and the third was

¹ That is, the holy place.
narrow without

² Or, windows broad within, and
³ That is, the most holy place.

or colonnade, though it sometimes gave access to one. Cp. vii. 6, 'the *ūlām* of the pillars,' i.e. the great gateway which led into the portico. The *ūlām* was probably derived from the Egyptian *pylon* or *propylon* (for an illustration see Perrot and Chipiez, *Art in Egypt*, II. 159). In Egypt a group of buildings, such as Solomon was erecting, would have from three to six of these gateways (see the General View of Karnak, restored, in Perrot and Chipiez, I. 360); and accordingly we find beside the *ūlām* of the Temple, also an *ūlām* of the portico (vii. 6), and an *ūlām* of the judgement-seat (vii. 7). The great height (120 cubits) attributed to the *ūlām* in Chr. also agrees with the view that something of the nature of a *pylon* is meant here. A *pylon* still standing at Karnak is 146 feet high. The *pylon* of a temple sometimes led directly into a portico (Perrot and Chipiez, I. 348).

before the temple of the house] i.e. to the east of the holy place.

2. of fixed lattice-work] Such windows (stone gratings) are found in the great hall of the Temple at Karnak, in the parts contiguous to the roof. They admitted of course very little light, but nothing beyond the most subdued daylight was ever needed in any Egyptian or Hebrew temple. The ritual, except in a few particulars and on rare occasions, was performed in the open air. (Cp. Perrot and Chipiez, *Art in Egypt*, II. 162—168.) The translators of the A.V., thinking apparently of the Norman windows familiar to them in English churches, gave as a marginal rendering, 'windows broad within and narrow without.'

5. stories] Or, floors; Heb. *yāqī'a*. These stories were divided up into side-chambers, as appears from the closing words of this verse.

the oracle] See note on v. 16.

side-chambers] Or, side-buildings; Heb. *çēlā'ōth*, 'ribs.' This name is given to these buildings because they enclosed the temple: The ordinary word for a chamber in the Temple is *lišcāh* (2 K. xxiii. 11; Jer. xxxvi. 10).

6. nethermost] i.e. lowest. So 'Beth-horon the nether' (ix. 15) means 'the lower Beth-horon' (2 Chr. viii. 15). *Nether* is connected etymologically with 'beneath.'

seven cubits broad: for on the outside he made rebatements *in the wall* of the house round about, that *the beams* should not have hold in the walls of the house. And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready ¹at the quarry: and there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building. The door for the ²middle side-chambers was in the right ³side of the house: and they went up by winding stairs into the middle *chambers*, and out of the middle into the third. So he built the house, and finished it; and he covered the house with beams and ⁴planks of cedar. And he built the stories against all the house, each five cubits high: and ⁵they rested on the house with timber of cedar.

11 And the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying,

¹ Or, *when it was brought away lowest the house* ² The Sept. and Targum have, *Heb. shoulder* ³ Heb. *rows* ⁴ Or, *he fastened*

rebatements] The walls must have been of great thickness to allow such rebatements, but no measurement of thickness is given here. See the introductory note to this chapter.

⁷ *made ready*] The stones were used just as they were taken from the quarry; they were not squared nor dressed. Such stones were called 'whole, unhewn.' Cp. Exod. xx. 25; Deut. xxvii. 6; Josh. viii. 31. What was 'hewn' was profane. Thus huge stones were used for the building of the walls as well as for the foundations.

at the quarry] Heb. *massa*. The meaning of the word is quite doubtful.

⁸ *middle side-chambers*] Read, *lowest side-chambers*; so LXX. Targ.

⁹ *he covered*] i.e. 'roofed.' The roof was no doubt flat, as in the temples of Egypt. Vaulting was known to the Egyptians, but it was not used by them for their more important buildings (Perrot and Chipiez, *Art in Egypt*, I. 110—112). The flat roof is 'almost universal in Syria at the present day' (Perrot and Chipiez, *Art in Phœnicia*, I. 115—116).

¹⁰ *they rested on the house*] Strictly speaking, on the rebatements. See v. 6.

11—13 (cp. ix. 1—5). THE LORD'S PROMISE TO SOLOMON.

This passage is absent from LXX. (B). It may be a later addition to the text.

11. *the word of the LORD*] Nothing is said about a prophet here; perhaps the word was revealed as the corresponding message in ix. 1—5, in a dream or vision.

Concerning this house which thou art in building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes, and execute my judgements, and keep all my commandments to walk in them; then will I establish my word with thee, which I spake unto David thy father. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake my people Israel.

So Solomon built the house, and finished it. And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar; from the floor of the house unto the walls of the ceiling, he covered them on the inside with wood: and he covered the floor of the house with boards of fir. And he built twenty cubits on the hinder part of the house with boards of cedar from the floor unto the walls: he even built them for it within, for an oracle, even for the most holy place.

¹ Or, both the floor of the house and the walls &c. and so ver. 16

² Or, cypress

³ The Sept. has, beams

12. my statutes, &c.] Cp. ii. 3, note.

unto David] Cp. ix. 5; 2 Sam. vii. 13.

13. I will dwell] Or, I will tabernacle. Cp. Exod. xxv. 8; Rev. xxi. 3 (with marg.). LXX. (A), κατασκηνώσω, 'I will pitch my tabernacle (σκηνή).'

14—22 (cp. 2 Chr. iii. 8). THE INTERIOR OF THE HOUSE. THE ORACLE.

The description of the house is continued. On the inside the house was panelled with cedar, and the floor was laid with fir (v. 15). At the west end a length of 30 feet was measured off for the inner sanctuary, while the remainder, a length of 60 feet, was assigned to the rest of the house (vv. 16, 17). The cedar walls were carved (v. 18). The inner sanctuary was in the form of a cube, measuring 30 feet every way; its walls were overlaid with gold (vv. 19—20). Chains of gold marked off the inner sanctuary, and the altar belonging to it was overlaid with gold (vv. 21, 22).

Some difficulties in this section are due to the fact that the text has been interpolated, e.g. in vv. 20—22.

15. unto the walls] Heb. 'unto the *kîrôth*.' Better (reading Heb. *kôrôth*), unto the beams or rafters.

fir] Marg. cypress, a wood used also for the hull of ships, while the masts were made of cedar (Ezek. xxvii. 5).

16. unto the walls] In the case of the inner sanctuary, both floor and walls were of cedar. In the rest of the house the floor was of fir.

for an oracle] Heb. 'for a *dêbir*.' St Jerome, the translator of the Vulgate, supposed that *dêbir* was derived from the Heb. *dabbêr*, 'to

17 And the house, that is, the temple before *the oracle*, was
 18 forty cubits *long*. And there was cedar on the house within,
 carved with ¹knops and open flowers: all was cedar; there
 19 was no stone seen. And he prepared an oracle in the
 midst of the house within, to set there the ark of the
 20 covenant of the LORD. And within the oracle was *a space*
of twenty cubits in length, and twenty cubits in breadth,
 and twenty cubits in the height thereof; and he overlaid it
 21 with pure gold: ²and he covered the altar with cedar. So

¹ Or, *gourds*

² Or, *he overlaid the altar also, which was of cedar*

speak,' and that the *albir* was the part of the Temple from which the
 LORD's voice was heard. Cp. Exod. xxv. 22. He accordingly trans-
 lated the word by *oraculum*, from which the English translators took
oracle. Similarly Aquila and Symmachus give *χρηματιστηριον*. It is
 almost certain, however, that *albir* means simply the hinder part of the
 Temple, its inmost recess. The word fell out of use in Hebrew, and
 the Chronicler prefers the expression 'the most holy house.' Even here
 'the most holy place' is added in explanation of 'oracle' (*albir*).

17. *the house*] i.e. the rest of the house.

18. *knops*] So also A.V. The meaning of the word in Old English
 is 'buds.' Cp. Exod. xxv. 33, where it is said that 'knops' and
 'flowers' were arranged alternately on the golden candlestick. But a
 more probable rendering of the Heb. word is 'gourds,' i.e. the plants,
 not the fruit merely (vii. 24, note).

19. *he prepared an oracle*] See v. 16.

to set there the ark] Cp. 2 Sam. vii. 2.

the ark of the covenant of the LORD] So called because it con-
 tained the words of the covenant. Cp. Dent. iv. 13; x. 4, 5. For the
 same reason it is sometimes called 'the ark of the testimony' (Exod.
 xxv. 16, 22).

20. *twenty cubits in the height thereof*] The inner sanctuary was
 thus a cube. The new Jerusalem which St John saw in vision was of
 the same form (Rev. xxi. 16).

pure gold] The gold used by Solomon for different purposes is
 defined as 'pure' (here and in vii. 49; x. 21), as 'beaten' (in x. 16, 17,
 shields), and as 'finest' (in x. 18, plating for the ivory throne). In not
 one of these cases, however, is the translation of the Heb. epithet
 certain. Gold was often used in ancient times debased considerably
 with alloy. Layard (*Nineveh and Babylon*, p. 388, note) expresses
 the opinion that 'much of the metal called gold, both in the sacred
 writings and in the profane authors of antiquity, was really copper
 alloyed with other metals, the aurichalcum or orichalcum of the Greeks.'
 In the palace at Khorsabad (in Assyria) was found the shaft of a column
 of wood covered with a bronze sheath (E. Babeloo, *Oriental Antiquities*,

Solomon overlaid the house within with pure gold: and he drew chains of gold across before the oracle; and he overlaid it with gold. And the whole house he overlaid with gold, 22 until all the house was finished: also the whole altar that belonged to the oracle he overlaid with gold. And in the 23 oracle he made two cherubim of olive wood, each ten cubits

p. 70). This baser metal may have been called 'gold' when it was gilded, for 'gilding appears to have been extensively used' in Assyrian palaces (Layard, *Nineveh*, p. 388).

and he covered the altar] The Heb. text can hardly be correct. Read with LXX., 'and he made an altar over against the oracle, and overlaid it with gold.' This altar would be for incense. Cp. vii. 48.

21. he drew chains of gold across] It is difficult to reconcile this statement with that of v. 31, according to which there were doors of olive wood to the oracle. Were these doors left open and the chains left stretched across the opening? In 2 Chr. iii. a *veil* of separation is mentioned (v. 14), and *chains* (v. 16).

22. And the whole house he overlaid with gold] In v. 20 it is said that the inner sanctuary was overlaid with 'pure' gold.

23—28 (= 2 Chr. iii. 10—13). THE CHERUBIM.

23. *cherubim*] *Cherub* (plur. *cherubim*) is a word of doubtful meaning and (probably) of foreign origin. Ezekiel, the priest who had probably seen the Temple before he was carried away to Babylon (Ezek. i. 1—3), has given a description of a vision of the heavenly cherubim (Ezek. i. 5—14), but we cannot tell how far the objects of his vision corresponded with the figures placed in Solomon's Temple. The cherubim, together with the mysterious 'wheels,' formed the throne of JEHOVAH (Ezek. x.). They were winged and had each four faces (Ezek. i. 6, 10; cp. x. 14); to wit, of a man, of a lion, of an ox, and of an eagle. When however the prophet describes his vision of a restored temple, and speaks of the cherubim figured on its walls, he says that the cherubim had *two* faces (Ezek. xli. 18, 19). Their hands were human (Ezek. x. 8). Thus the cherub was thought of as a composite creature, partly man, partly beast, and partly bird, resembling the winged leopard, or the human-headed bull, or the lion-colossus of Assyria, or again the winged sphinx of the Egyptians and the Phœnicians. The cherub was often placed at the entrance of important buildings on each side of the gate. Cp. Perrot and Chipiez, *Art in Phœnicia*, i. 132, 133. 'The original idea belongs to the childhood of Israel's religion and is thus related to similar conceptions in other races.... The "cherub" survived as one of the traces of a Hebrew mythology, which was retained by the prophets because it represented pictorially the attributes of the majesty of the God of Israel, and was employed to express more vividly the means by which His glory is revealed to man' (Ryle in Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, i. 378).

24 high. And five cubits was the one wing of the cherub, and
 five cubits the other wing of the cherub: from the uttermost
 part of the one wing unto the uttermost part of the other
 25 were ten cubits. And the other cherub was ten cubits:
 26 both the cherubim were of one measure and one form. The
 height of the one cherub was ten cubits, and so was it of
 27 the other cherub. And he set the cherubim within the
 inner house: and the wings of the cherubim were stretched
 forth, so that the wing of the one touched the one wall, and
 the wing of the other cherub touched the other wall; and
 their wings touched one another in the midst of the house.
 28 And he overlaid the cherubim with gold. And he carved
 29 all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of
 cherubim and palm trees and open flowers, within and

olive wood] So also *vv.* 31, 32. In both passages an impossible rendering. Large objects cannot be made from the wood of the olive, which has straggling branches, and a gnarled and often hollow trunk of small circumference. Neither cherubim measuring 10 × 10 cubits, nor 'doors' of any useful size could be made of olive wood. The Heb. phrase means 'wood of the oil tree' (see Isa. xli. 19, 'oil tree'; marg., 'oleaster'). 'Oil tree' is probably the designation of some tree which exudes a resinous gum resembling olive oil in bright colour, i.e. some kind of pine. See article OIL TREE in *Hastings' Dictionary*.

27. *the inner house*] i.e. the 'oracle.' Cp. *v.* 19.

the wings...were stretched forth] Apparently the cherubim stood upright on their feet facing the spectator, as they sometimes appear on the Assyrian reliefs.

28. *overlaid...with gold*] The same process was followed in the case of idolatrous images. Cp. Isa. xxx. 22.

29, 30 (cp. 2 Chr. iii. 5—7). DECORATIONS OF THE HOUSE.

29. *carved all the walls*] This was also the case with Egyptian temples (Perrot and Chipiez, *Egyptian Art*, i. 435), and probably also with Phœnician (P. and C., *Art in Phœnicia*, i. 125, 'Temples and palaces were distinguished rather by wealth of decoration than by magnificence of plan').

cherubim and palm trees and open flowers] According to the Chronicler, 'palm trees and *chains* (LXX. χαλαστιά, 'festoons')...and cherubim.' 'Open flowers' called by Perrot and Chipiez (*Art in Phœnicia*, i. 135, 137, figures 77 and 79) 'rosettes' are found on slabs of alabaster which once in all probability formed part of the great temple at Gebal.

within and without] The walls of Egyptian temples were usually covered on the outside, as well as within, with carvings, often in high relief.

without. And the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, 30
 within and without. And for the entering of the oracle he 31
 made doors of olive wood: the ¹lintel and door posts were
 a fifth part of the wall. So he made two doors of olive 32
 wood; and he carved upon them carvings of cherubim and
 palm trees and open flowers, and overlaid them with gold;
 and he spread the gold upon the cherubim, and upon the
 palm trees. So also made he for the entering of the temple 33
 door posts of olive wood, out of a fourth part of the wall;
 and two doors of ²fir wood; the two leaves of the one door 34
 were folding, and the two leaves of the other door were
 folding. And he carved thereon cherubim and palm trees 35
 and open flowers: and he overlaid them with gold fitted
 upon the graven work. And he built the inner court with 36

¹ Or, posts

² Or, cypress

31—35 (cp. 2 Chr. iii. 14). THE DOORS.

31. *doors of olive wood*] According to the Chronicler, who makes no mention of doors, the Holy of Holies was closed by a veil or curtain such as was made for the Tabernacle in the Wilderness according to Exod. xxvi. 31, 32. 'Marks of hinges,' write Perrot and Chipiez (*Egyptian Art*, 1. 359) 'have been found in the Egyptian temples, and it is certain that the sanctuary was permanently closed in some fashion against the unbidden visits of the curious.'

olive wood] Rather, of the wood of the oil tree. See note on v. 23.
a fifth part of the wall] According to this translation, the door together with its lintel and side-posts was equal to a fifth part of the wall in which it was set. But the text and the translation are both doubtful.

32. *carvings*] Cp. what is said of the walls in v. 29.

33. *the temple*] i.e. the *hēykāl*, or 'Holy Place' as distinguished from the 'Oracle' or 'Holy of Holies.' Cp. v. 1 (note on *the house*).

out of a fourth part of the wall] It is hardly possible to translate the Hebrew text as it stands; probably the text should be corrected on the analogy of vii. 5, *posts square* in prospect.

34. *were folding*] The Heb. term is used only in this passage, and its meaning is uncertain. A possible rendering is 'rolling' or 'sliding'; the leaves opened by sliding back as if mounted on wheels.

36 (cp. 2 Chr. iv. 9). THE COURT.

36. *the inner court*] The court meant was no doubt the court in which the temple itself stood, called in 2 Chr. iv. 9, 'the court of the priests.' In vii. 8 a second court is mentioned, which contained Solomon's house; this is probably to be identified with the 'middle

37 three rows of hewn stone, and a row of cedar beams. In the fourth year was the foundation of the house of the
 38 LORD laid, in the month Ziv. And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which is the eighth month, was the house finished ¹throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was he seven years in building it.

¹ Or, *with all the appurtenances thereof, and with all the ordinances thereof*

court' of 2 K. xx. 4 (*Kṛī* and LXX.). A third 'the great court' (vii. 9, 12) was probably an outer court, containing the whole range of Solomon's buildings, Temple and Palace alike; we may identify it with the 'great court' of 2 Chr. iv. 9, though the Hebrew word used for 'court' in Kings is (as usual) *hāḥēr*, while in Chron. it is *dsārāh*.
with three rows] Cp. vii. 12.

37, 38. THE DATES OF THE BEGINNING AND COMPLETION OF THE TEMPLE.

In the LXX. (B) these two verses (preceded by v. 31, 32) are placed between vv. 1 and 2 of ch. vi., and it has been suggested that this is a more appropriate place and indeed probably their original position.

37. *In the fourth year*] Cp. v. 1, note.

38. *in the month Bul*] The same name was in use among the Phœnicians; the well-known funeral inscription of Eshmunazar, king of Zidon (circ. 300 B.C.), begins in the very words of the Heb. text, *bēyeraḥ būl*.

throughout all the parts &c.] In all respects according to the plan laid down. Cp. marg., and Exod. xxvi. 30.

CUS. VII., VIII.

The order of the sections of these two chapters differs in the Hebrew and in LXX. (B). In the annexed scheme the Hebrew order is followed, the order of LXX. being signified by numbers placed at the end of each heading. LXX. (A) agrees with the Heb. except that it gives Solomon's Song *twice*, the second time in agreement with LXX. (B).

- | | | | |
|-----|-------|---------|---|
| (1) | vii. | 1—12. | Building of Solomon's Palace (2). |
| (2) | | 13—51. | Making of the Temple Vessels (1). |
| (3) | viii. | 1—11. | The Ark brought into the Sanctuary (3). |
| (4) | | 12, 13. | Solomon's Song (6). |
| (5) | | 14—21. | Solomon's Benediction (4). |
| (6) | | 22—53. | Solomon's Prayer (5). |
| (7) | | 54—66. | Solomon's Exhortation and Sacrifices (7). |

On the question whether the Dedication of the Temple followed or preceded (as some think) the completion of Solomon's palace, see the note on viii. 1.

And Solomon was building his own house thirteen years, 7 and he finished all his house. For he built the house of the 2 forest of Lebanon; the length thereof was an hundred cubits, and the breadth thereof fifty cubits, and the height thereof thirty cubits, upon four rows of cedar pillars, with cedar beams upon the pillars. And it was covered with cedar 3 above over the forty and five ¹beams, that were upon the

¹ Or, *side-chambers* Heb. *ribs*

CH. VII. 1—12. THE PALACE AND ITS ANNEXES.

(See Introductory Note to chs. vi., vii.)

Arrangements similar to those described in this section prevailed in Egypt from very ancient times. 'Adjoining the palace was a huge court, connected with which were the "halls" or offices of the central government. The entire complex of palaces and adjoining offices was known as the "Great House"' (Breasted, *History of Egypt*, p. 79).

1. *thirteen years*] Cf. vi. 37, 38; ix. 10.

all his house] i.e. his own house (v. 8), the house of the forest of Lebanon (vv. 2—5), and Pharaoh's daughter's house (v. 8).

2. *the house of the forest of Lebanon*] The account is brief and orderly. We have in v. 2 (1) the name, (2) the dimensions, (3) the structure and material of the lower part of the house, while in vv. 3, 4 are given (4) the structure, and (5) the lighting of the upper part. Finally (6) the doors are described in v. 5. But a good deal is left unexplained, and the last words of v. 4 are repeated in v. 5 apparently through a scribal error.

This building is mentioned again in x. 17, 21 (= 2 Chr. ix. 16, 20), and, under the name of *the house of the forest*, in Isa. xxii. 8. It drew its name probably from the *forest* of cedar pillars of which it appeared to consist. It was used for an armoury and treasure-house.

upon four rows] LXX., 'three rows.' The reading of the Hebrew is to be preferred for two reasons; (1) because the greater depth of view which *four* rows of pillars would give over *three*, forms a better justification of the name, 'house of the *forest*,' and (2) because the reading of LXX. here is plainly based upon the mistaken interpretation given by LXX. in v. 3. There the *forty and five...fifteen in a row* is wrongly taken to refer to the *pillars* instead of (as R. V. marg.) to the *chambers*. See below.

beams] Rather, **blocks**. In both Egyptian and Classical Architecture flat square stones (called *abaci* in Latin) stood on the tops of the columns immediately under the architrave. In the house of the forest of Lebanon these *abaci* consisted of square blocks of cedar, cedar *abaci* for cedar columns. Symmachus, Pesh. Targ. (following a slightly different reading of the Hebrew) give *chapters* ('capitals') as in vv. 16—20. The Heb. word rendered 'beams' in v. 3 is different.

3. *beams*] Better as marg., *side-chambers*; Heb., *çela'oth*. Cp. vi. 5, note.

4 pillars; fifteen in a row. And there were ¹prospects in three
 5 rows, and light was over against light in three ranks. And
 all the doors and posts ²were square in prospect: and light
 6 was over against light in three ranks. And he made the
 porch of pillars; the length thereof was fifty cubits, and the
 7 breadth thereof thirty cubits; and a porch before them; and
 pillars and ³thick beams before them. And he made the
 porch of the throne where he might judge, even the porch
 of judgement: and it was covered with cedar from floor to
 8 floor. And his house where he might dwell, the other court
 within the porch, was of the like work. He made also an
 house for Pharaoh's daughter, (whom Solomon had taken to

¹ Or, beams

² Or, were made square with beams

³ Or, a threshold

fifteen in a row] 'Probably the three rows of chambers were laid side by side on the four rows of pillars.

4. *prospects]* 'Openings giving a view downwards'; so Symmachus, παραψύσι.

5. *were square in prospect]* Marg. *were made square with beams*; so LXX. τετράγωνοι μεμελθρωμένα. The meaning of the expression *in prospect* is doubtful, and the Heb. text may be faulty.

and light was over against light in three ranks] These words are repeated from v. 4, probably through an ancient scribal error.

6. *the porch of pillars]* the gateway of the pillars (i.e. of the portico), as in vi. 3. Something is meant corresponding to the Egyptian 'pylon,' which often led into a portico.

the length thereof] The reference is of course to the portico, not to the gateway.

and a porch (pylon) before them; and...before them] The hall of pillars or 'portico' was approached through a pylon. The last seven words yield no satisfactory sense, and the text is without doubt faulty.

7. *the porch]* i.e. the gateway, or 'the pylon.'

8. *the other court]* Rather, in the other court. Cp. 2 K. xx. 4, note.

within the porch (gateway)] The pylon stood between two courts, a public one in which Solomon gave audience, and a private one in which the king's house stood.

was of the like work] i.e. was covered or panelled with cedar wood.

an house for Pharaoh's daughter] This was perhaps 'a house of the women' (cp. Esth. ii. 9), in which Pharaoh's daughter, like Esther, occupied 'the best place,' the rest of the house being assigned to other wives. It may however have been for the chief queen's exclusive use. Of the Egyptian monarch Amenhotep III. (circ. 1400 B.C.) it is recorded that he laid out a separate quarter for his queen Tiy, and excavated in the enclosure a lake a mile long and over

wife,) like unto this porch. All these were of costly stones, 9 even of hewn stone, ¹according to measure, sawed with saws, within and without, even from the foundation unto the coping, and so on the outside unto the great court. And 10 the foundation was of costly stones, even great stones, stones of ten cubits, and stones of eight cubits. And above were 11 costly stones, even hewn stone, according to measure, and cedar wood. And the great court round about had three 12 rows of hewn stone, and a row of cedar beams; ²like as the inner court of the house of the LORD, and the porch of the house.

And King Solomon sent and fetched Hiram out of 13

¹ Or, *after divers measures*

² Or, *both for...and for*

a thousand feet wide for pleasure boats (Breasted, *Egypt*, p. 349). In the palace of the Assyrian king Sargon at Khorsabad the hareem, which occupied a surface of more than 94,726 square feet, formed a group of structures communicating with the rest of the palace by two doors only. It was with its lofty blind walls, a sort of prison in the very bosom of the fortress. Within there were several courts and isolated suites of rooms, in which the apartments of the women were separately arranged.' E. Babelon, *Oriental Antiquities* (London, 1906), p. 70.

9. *costly stones*] Cp. v. 17, note. The stones were valuable partly because they were of huge size and partly because in spite of this huge size they were *worked*.

according to measure] Better as marg., *after* [divers] *measures*, i.e. each fitted for its place.

12. *the great court...the inner court*] See note on vi. 36.

13, 14. HIRAM THE WORKER IN BRASS.

13. *sent and fetched*] According to 2 Chr. ii. 7 Solomon asked Hiram the king to send him an artificer.

Hiram] LXX. Χειρμ. Called *Hiram* in v. 40 and *Huram* in 2 Chr. iv. 16; cp. 2 Chr. li. 13 marg., and Χειρωμος or Χειραμος by Josephus, *Antig.* viii. 76. (Cp. the note on the name of Hiram the king, v. 1.) According to Kings and Josephus his mother was of the tribe of Naphtali, but according to Chron. she was of the tribe of Dan. His father according to both Kings and Chron. was a Tyrian. On the other hand LXX. of Kings, while describing Hiram's father as a Tyrian, transfers to Hiram himself the designation 'of the tribe of Naphtali,' which belongs in the Heb. text to Hiram's mother. Perhaps we have here a trace of the ancient custom of matriarchy, by which the offspring of a mixed marriage was reckoned

14 Tyre. He was the son of a widow woman of the tribe of Naphtali, and his father was a man of Tyre, a worker in brass; and he was filled with wisdom and understanding and cunning, to work all works in brass. And he came to
15 king Solomon, and wrought all his work. For he fashioned

as belonging to the mother's tribe. This supposition would agree with the phrase here used of Solomon; he 'sent and fetched' Hiram out of Tyre, treating him not as a Tyrian but as his own subject. Cp. article MARRIAGE in Hastings' *Dictionary*, III. 263.

14. brass] Heb. *nēhōsheth*. See Gen. iv. 22, R.V. marg., *copper*. It was the commonest metal known to the Hebrews, weapons, offensive and defensive (1 Sam. xvii. 5, 6) and vessels of all kinds (see below, v. 45) being made from it. The Heb. name *nēhōsheth* seems to have included both 'copper' and 'bronze' (an alloy consisting of copper and tin), the Greek χαλκός. 'Brass' (an alloy of copper and zinc) is very rarely found among ancient remains, whereas objects in copper and bronze have been found in abundance in Chaldæa dating from as early as 2200 B.C., among Egyptian remains of the same date, and among the relics of Troy and of the early Phœnicians. Solomon's great store of copper consisted partly of booty taken in David's wars (2 Sam. viii. 8, 10, 11). Copper might also be obtained from the Egyptians who had mines in the Sinaitic peninsula, and from the Phœnicians who were masters of Cyprus, the very land which gave its name to the metal, *Cyprium aes* or *Cyprium*, late Latin *cuprum*. See article BRASS in Hastings' *Dictionary*; Nowack, *Heb. Archäologie*, I. 243.

cunning] Here (as in Ps. cxxxvii. 5) a substantive; 'skill, knowledge.' R.V. rightly has introduced a comma after 'cunning.'

15—22. (2 Chr. iii. 15—17). THE PILLARS, JACHIN AND BOAZ.

These 'pillars' (Heb. '*ammūdīm*,' the same word as in v. 2, but different from the word used in xiv. 23*a*) were set up 'at the porch (pylon) of the temple' (v. 21). They were probably detached, like the obelisks of the Egyptian architects. 'The usual situation of the obelisks was in front of the first pylon of the temples. There they stood in couples, one upon each side of the entrance' (Perrot and Chipiez, *Égyptian Art*, II. 170). A pair of lofty columns standing before the entrance was a not uncommon feature in temples built by Phœnicians. Such was the case with the temple at Paphos in Cyprus (see Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, ed. 2, page 488), and with the temple of Hercules (Melkart) at Tyre, of which Herodotus (II. 44) says, 'Therein were two pillars, one of pure gold, the other of emerald, which shone brightly at night.' Herodotus speaks of them as 'offerings' (ἀναθήματα), and such no doubt were Solomon's pillars. The copper or bronze of which they were made had been dedicated to JEHOVAH (2 Sam. viii. 10, 11) and this dedication was consummated when the metal was worked up into

the two pillars of brass, ¹ of eighteen cubits high apiece: and a line of twelve cubits compassed ² either of them about. And he made two chapiters of molten brass, to set upon the 16 tops of the pillars: the height of the one chapter was five cubits, and the height of the other chapter was five cubits. There were nets of checker work, and wreaths of chain work, 17 for the chapiters which were upon the top of the pillars; seven for the one chapter, and seven for the other chapter. So he made the pillars; and there were two rows round about 18

¹ Heb. *eighteen cubits was the height of one pillar*

² Heb. *the other pillar*

pillars, and the pillars were set up in the Temple area. The great Egyptian queen Hatshepsut, who lived in the fifteenth century B.C., set up two pillars before the Temple at Karnak, and wrote of them, 'I sat in the palace, I remembered him who fashioned me, my heart led me to make for him two obelisks of electrum, whose points mingled with heaven' (Breasted, *History of Egypt*, page 281).

15. *he fashioned*] So Vulg. *fixit*, the correct translation of the Heb. word. LXX. following a slightly different Heb. text gives, 'he cast, founded' (as in Exod. xxxvii. 3), and with this A.V. agrees. It may, however, be doubted whether the ancients could cast so large an object as one of these pillars, at any rate in one piece.

eighteen cubits &c.] Several words have dropped out of the Heb. text (see margin), but the general sense of the verse is clear; each pillar was 18 cubits high and (being 12 cubits in circumference) 4 cubits in diameter. The addition of the capitals or 'chapiters' (5 cubits high) mentioned in the next verse brings the ratio between height and diameter to 23 : 4. Chron. attributes a height of 35 cubits to each pillar.

twelve cubits] LXX. 'fourteen.' In Jer. lii. 21 is given the additional information that the pillars were hollow, and that the thickness of the metal was 'four fingers.' Probably both these statements were once to be found in 1 K. vii. 15 also.

16. *chapiters*] 'Chapter' or 'chapture' is an old word for 'capital.'

17. *and wreaths of chain work*] Rather, with cords (*twisted cords*) of chain work. The words refer to the *nets*, the *cords* of which were realised in the carving. The Heb. word for *chain* used here, is used only of ornamental chains or cords.

seven for...and seven for] Read (with LXX.), a net for...and a net for. The difference between the two readings affects one letter only in Heb.

18. *So he made the pillars*] Read, *And he made the pomegranates*. Later on in the verse we have to read with Peshitta, *upon the top of the pillars*, where the A.V. has *pomegranates*. The words 'pillars' and 'pomegranates' have changed places through scribal error.

two rows] i.e. of pomegranates.

upon the one network, to cover the chapiters that were upon the top of the ¹pillars: and so did he for the other chapiter.
 19 And the chapiters that were upon the top of the pillars in
 20 the porch were of lily work, four cubits. And there were chapiters above also upon the two pillars, close by the belly which was beside the network: and the pomegranates were two hundred, in rows round about upon the other chapiter.
 21 And he set up the pillars at the porch of the temple: and he set up the right pillar, and called the name thereof ²Jachin: and he set up the left pillar, and called the name

¹ So some ancient authorities. The text has, *pomegranates*

² That is, *He shall establish*.

the pillars] So R.V. rightly, following the Peshitta. The Heb. text, Targ. Vulg. A.V. have *pomegranates*. LXX. is here confused and paraphrastic.

19. *And the chapiters &c.*] A very difficult verse. The first words correspond in sense with the first words of v. 22, *And upon the top of the pillars was lily work*. The last three words of the Heb. text almost defy translation, *in the porch four cubits* (A.V.). The Peshitta rendering, *And he made in the porch four cubits*, i.e. he prepared a space four cubits deep to receive the pillars, agrees with the reckoning (cp. v. 15) that the pillars were each four cubits in diameter, and may be correct, but it is not unlikely that the whole of v. 19 is made up of glosses.

lily work] Most probably representations of the lotus, a frequent form of decoration in Egyptian temples.

20. *and there were chapiters &c.*] The text of this verse is quite uncertain; the first clause adds nothing to the statement of v. 16, while the second (*close by the belly which was beside the network*) is unintelligible. The closing words should probably read, *and the pomegranates were, in rows round about, two hundred upon the one chapiter and two hundred upon the other chapiter*. There were four hundred pomegranates in all (v. 22).

21. *And he set up the pillars at the porch of the temple*] In 2 Chr. iii. 15, *before the house*.

Jachin...Boaz] The names of the two pillars read in sequence form a sentence, 'Boaz will establish it.' But 'Boaz' as a proper name is known only as the name of Ruth's protector and eventual husband, whereas what we expect here is some name or title of the God of Israel. But 'Boaz' (Heb. בועז) may be easily explained as a corruption of 'Baal' (Heb. בעל), a title meaning 'Lord,' which was applied both to JEHOVAH (Hos. ii. 16, 17 [18, 19, Heb.]), and to the god of Tyre (1 K. xvi. 31). The alteration from 'Baal' to 'Boaz' was probably intentional, being in accordance with the declaration of Hosea (*loc. cit.*) that Israel would no longer be permitted to call JEHOVAH by the title, 'Baal,' which was

thereof ¹Boaz. And upon the top of the pillars was lily ²² work: so was the work of the pillars finished. And he ²³ made the molten sea of ten cubits from brim to brim, round

¹ That is, perhaps, *In it is strength.*

freely applied to heathen gods. A similar alteration is that of 'Baal' to 'Bosheth' in the name of Saul's son Eshbaal (1 Chr. viii. 33), which appears also in the form Ish-bosheth (2 Sam. ii. 8 *al*) and in the name of Jonathan's son Meribbaal (1 Chr. viii. 34) which generally appears in the form Mephibosheth (2 Sam. ix. 6 *al*). The hateful word 'Baal' was to be taken out of Israel's mouth. Cp. the notes on 1 Chr. viii. 33, 34 in the *Camb. Bible*. Thus the inscription on the pillars ran originally, 'The Lord—the Baal—will establish it,' but while 'Baal' meant to Solomon JHIOVAH the God of Israel, to the Tyrian workmen it meant Melkart (Hercules) the god of Tyre. 'Boaz' is perhaps meant to signify, 'He in whom is strength.'

Boas] LXX. *Balas* (Βάλας), an intermediate reading between the original 'Baal' and the present 'Boaz'.

22. *And...lily work*] This statement has been made already in v. 19; in the Hebrew the five words which compose the sentence are identical (except for the 'And' prefixed) in the two verses.

so was the work of the pillars finished] And the description of the work of the pillars is finished. The word used here for 'finish' (*iāmam*) is not that used in vi. 38; vii. 1 (*kālāh, killāh*), nor in vii. 51 ('ended,' *shālēm*). It is found however in vi. 22 (see note there) and Job xxxi. 40, 'The words of Job are ended.' It is probable that the clause is a marginal note. *Vv.* 21—23 ff. are parallel to 2 Chr. iii. 17—iv. 2 ff., except that v. 22 differs altogether from 2 Chr. iv. 1. Probably Chronicles preserves the earlier text, for while v. 22 tells us nothing new, 2 Chr. iv. 1 makes an important addition to our knowledge. It runs thus, *Moreover (or Also) he made an altar of brass, twenty cubits the length thereof, and twenty cubits the breadth thereof, and ten cubits the height thereof.* Probably this verse was still in the text of Kings when the Chronicler compiled his work. It was omitted by scribal error. The earliest altars were of earth or of stone (Exod. xx. 24, 25), but altars of 'brass' were known to the Phœnicians (cp. v. 18, note) at least as early as the fourth or fifth century, B.C.

23—26 (= 2 Chr. iv. 3—5). THE SEA OF MOLTEN METAL.

23. *And he made the sea of molten metal*] On this Josephus writes, 'and he cast also a brasen sea shaped as a hemisphere, and the

¹ Probably the Heb. text which lay before the LXX. read 'Baal' but with ? (x) written above the final ב (ב) thus בַּבַּב , to signify that the word 'Baal' was to be pronounced with a final 's' in order to conform to the principle enunciated in Hos. ii. 16, 17. The LXX., mistaking the purpose of the suspended letter, transcribed Βάλας. (Another instance of the suspended letter is found in Jud. xviii. 30 where a suspended N indicates that the name 'Moses' is to be read 'Manasseh.' Here also the LXX. has taken in the extra letter in reproducing the name.)

The reading 'Boaz' (LXX. (A) Βόας) with σ in the first syllable is certainly late. Josephus (ed. Niese) has Ἀβαίς, Βαίς, Βαίς, Lat. *Baas*.

in compass, and the height thereof was five cubits: and a
 24 line of thirty cubits compassed it round about. And under
 the brim of it round about there were knops which did
 compass it,¹ for ten cubits, compassing the sea round about:
 25 the knops were in two rows, cast when it was cast. It stood
 upon twelve oxen, three looking toward the north, and

¹ Or, *ten in a cubit*

vessel was called *a sea* for its great size' (*Antiq.* VIII. 79). Several points are left uncertain by the description in Kings. The words *round in compass* would suit either a hemisphere or a cylinder. The measurements are subject to the uncertainty which attaches to the true length of the cubit; see note on vi. 2. In 2 K. xxv. 13 it is called *The sea of brass*. As we have no sufficient reason for believing that the ancients could cast so large a vessel whole, it has been suggested that the sea was of wood plated with plates of 'brass' (bronze). The purpose of the sea according to 2 Chr. iv. 6 was *for the priests to wash in*. It would thus correspond with the *laver of brass* (Exod. xxx. 17—21) which was to be placed between the Tent of Meeting and the Altar that Aaron and his sons might wash before performing their priestly functions. Some Egyptian temples, e.g. Karnak, had a sacred lake before the entrance. Cp. Breasted, *History of Egypt*, Fig. 149 (facing p. 390), also pp. 486—7. A bas-relief of the temple of the Armenian God Haldia shews 'two gigantic basins, probably of bronze, resting on tripods' placed before the gate; see Babelon, *Oriental Antiquities* (London, 1906), p. 77. On the other hand it has been suggested that the Sea was originally intended not for use, but for symbolism, and that its presence in the Temple indicates the triumph of JEHOVAH over chaos (the Deep) at creation. It is not unlikely that the water contained in this Sea was regarded as offered to God; cf. 1 Sam. vii. 6; 2 Sam. xxiii. 16.

The Sea is twice mentioned in later history. Ahaz took it down from the oxen which supported it, and put it on a stone pavement (2 K. xvi. 17). At the devastation of Jerusalem by Nebuzaradan the Chaldeans broke it in pieces, and carried the brass to Babylon (2 K. xxv. 13).

a line] i.e. a measuring line.

of thirty cubits] If the diameter was exactly ten cubits, and the figure was a perfect circle, the circumference would measure nearly 31½ cubits.

24. *knops*] If the expression *for ten cubits* which follows means *ten cubits in length*, the Heb. word should probably be rendered *gourds*. Three of these plants, each ten cubits long, would encompass the circumference of the Sea. The large leaves of the gourd serve well for ornament on a large scale. Cp. vi. 18, note.

25. *upon twelve oxen*] Appropriate supports for a large and heavy vessel. Whether any religious significance is to be attributed to the oxen does not appear. Certainly the making of such figures is not to

three looking toward the west, and three looking toward the south, and three looking toward the east: and the sea was set upon them above, and all their hinder parts were inward. And it was an handbreadth thick; and the brim thereof was wrought like the brim of a cup, like the flower of a lily; it held two thousand baths. And he made the ten bases of brass; four cubits was the length of one base, and four cubits the breadth thereof, and three cubits the height of it. And the work of the bases was on this manner: 26 27 28

be regarded as a breach of the Second Commandment (Exod. xx. 4, 5), for it cannot be shewn that they were regarded as gods, to whom worship of some kind was to be paid.

26. *lily*] The reference is perhaps to the lotus.

two thousand baths] Benzinger (*Archäologie*, p. 184) calculates that 2000 baths = 72,800 litres (16000 gallons), and that a hemisphere of the measurements given in v. 23 would contain 32,707 litres. There is uncertainty as to the precise length of the cubit and as to the precise capacity of the bath, but it seems/probable that the capacity of the Sea is overstated here. The estimate at 2000 baths is in any case unlikely to have been based on exact calculation. In 2 Chr. iv. 5 the capacity of the Sea is reckoned at 3000 baths.

27—27. (Cp. 2 Chr. iv. 14.) THE TEN BASES.

This passage presents several difficulties, partly because the precise meaning of some of the Hebrew words is uncertain, partly because the text is faulty. Recently however two ancient 'bases' or 'carriers' have been dug up in Cyprus, one at Larnaka and one at Ermoni (the ancient Salamis), which seem to be similar to those described here, though much smaller. A study of their construction throws some light on this passage (cp. B. Stade, *Zeitschrift f. d. alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*, 1901, pp. 145—190).

The main points however in the description are clear. The 'base' or 'carrier' was a square framework measuring $4 \times 4 \times 3$ cubits (v. 27); in which panels were inserted (28); having lions, oxen, and cherubim engraved upon them in relief (29). It was mounted on four wheels, and at each corner was a 'shoulder' to support the laver which was to be carried (30). Between these 'shoulders' however and the laver itself was a 'mouth,' i.e. a round rim to serve as a holder (31 a), but the rim stood in an [eight-sided?] frame of panels, on which were further reliefs (31 b). The wheels were $1\frac{1}{2}$ cubits high (32 b), and were strong as chariot-wheels (33). All the carriers were of one pattern (37).

27. *bases of brass*] Rather, carriers of bronze.

they had ¹borders; ²and there were borders between the
 29 ledges: and on the borders that were between the ledges
 were lions, oxen, and cherubim; and upon the ledges, ³there
 was a pedestal above: and beneath the lions and oxen were
 30 wreaths of hanging work. And every base had four brassen
 wheels, and axles of brass: and the four feet thereof had
⁴undersetters: beneath the laver were the undersetters
 31 molten, with wreaths at the side of each. And the mouth
 of it within the chapter and above was a cubit: and the
 mouth thereof was round after the work of a pedestal, a
 cubit and an half: and also upon the mouth of it were

¹ Or, *panels* (and so in vet. 29, &c.)

² Or, *it was in like manner above*

³ Or, *even borders*

⁴ Heb. *shoulders*

28. *they had borders;...the ledges*] For *borders* read *panels* with marg. By *ledges* are meant the straight rods of which the framework of the bases was made. Render, *they had panels, even panels between the rods of the frame-work*.

29. *lions, oxen, and cherubim*] *lions, oxen, even cherubim*. Of the cherubim some had lion-faces, others the faces of bulls. Cp. v. 36, *cherubim, lions, and palm trees*. The panels shewn on the base discovered at Larnaka are divided each into halves by the representation of a *palm tree*, on either side of which stands a winged quadruped, no doubt a *cherub*.

there was a pedestal above] Probably to be identified with the round rim (for receiving the laver) mentioned in v. 31.

wreaths] Heb. *lōyōth*, a rare word of uncertain meaning. On the Larnaka base are horizontal lines of bead-work or rope-work beneath the cherubim and palm trees. Such ornaments may be meant here.

30. *the four feet*] Heb. *p'āmōth*. If the bases of Solomon were like that of Larnaka, they resembled tables on wheels. The legs of the table ended upwards in *shoulders* which supported the *pedestal* (v. 29) or *mouth* (v. 31), on which the laver rested:

wreaths] See note on v. 29. On the Larnaka base along the upper half of each foot (or leg) runs a vertical line of double bead-work or rope work.

31. *the mouth*] The Larnaka base is crowned with a broad circular ornamented rim intended to receive a circular laver.

within the chapter] The mention of a chapter or capital is unsuitable here. Read, *within the shoulders*. The meaning is that the *mouth* was held in its place by the four shoulders which were, in the upper part of the frame.

and the mouth...above was a cubit] The total height of the rim or mouth was one cubit, or *a cubit and a half* according to the correction which occurs later in the verse.

gravings, and their borders were foursquare, not round. And the four wheels were underneath the borders; and the 32 axletrees of the wheels were in the base: and the height of a wheel was a cubit and half a cubit. And the work of the 33 wheels was like the work of a chariot wheel: their axletrees, and their felloes, and their spokes, and their naves, were all molten. And there were four undersettors at the four 34 corners of each base: the undersettors thereof were of the base itself. And in the top of the base was there a round 35 compass of half a cubit high: and on the top of the base the stays thereof and the borders thereof were of the same. And on the plates of the stays thereof, and on the borders 36 thereof, he graved cherubim, lions, and palm trees, according to the space of each, with wreaths round about. After this 37 manner he made the ten bases: all of them had one casting, one measure, and one form. And he made ten lavers of 38 brass: one laver contained forty baths: and every laver was

¹ Heb. *hands*

their panels were foursquare, not round] This result would be obtained if the round rim were inclosed in an octagonal frame of panels.

32. *underneath the panels*] The wheels did not hinder the view of the panels, nor of the creatures represented on them, but were far below the panels as in the Larnaka base.

were in the base] No sense can be extracted from the Hebrew. The reading is doubtless corrupt.

34. *undersettors*] Literally, *shoulders*. Cp. v. 30.

were of the base itself] This seems to mean that the undersettors were cast with the base itself, but the writer's meaning is not clear.

35. *was there a round compass*] The reference seems to be to the mouth (v. 31), but the text is almost certainly faulty.

of half a cubit high] According to v. 31 it was a cubit or a cubit and a half high.

stays] Cp. x. 19 (with marg.).

and the borders (panels) thereof] A different set of panels from those described in vv. 28, 29.

36. *on the plates*] Or, *tablets*.

of the stays thereof] These words in the Hebrew are not in grammatical construction with those which precede. They seem to be due to a scribal error.

according to the space of each] i.e. according to the clear space on each panel.

38—40 a (= 2 Chr. iv. 6, 11 a). THE LAVERS AND THE SEA.

38. *forty baths*] i.e. about 1450 litres (319 gallons) on Benzinger's estimate.

four cubits: and upon every one of the ten bases one laver.
 39 And he set the bases, five on the right ¹side of the house,
 and five on the left side of the house: and he set the sea on
 40 the right side of the house eastward, toward the south. And
²Hiram made the ³lavens, and the shovels, and the basons.
 So Hiram made ⁴an end of doing all the work that he wrought
 41 for king Solomon in the house of the LORD: the two pillars,
 and the two bowls of the chapiters that were on the top of
 the pillars; and the two networks to cover the two bowls of
 42 the chapiters that were on the top of the pillars; and the four
 hundred pomegranates for the two networks; two rows of
 pomegranates for each network, to cover the two bowls of
 43 the chapiters that were ⁴upon the pillars; and the ten bases,
 44 and the ten lavens on the bases; and the one sea, and the
 45 twelve oxen under the sea; and the pots, and the shovels,

¹ Heb. *shoulder*
 authorities read, *pots*

² Heb. *Hiram*

³ Many ancient

⁴ Heb. *upon the face of the pillars*

was four cubits] i.e. in diameter. A hemisphere with a diameter of four cubits would contain about 2000 litres (440 gallons). Assuming that the lavens were of some form of less capacity than a hemisphere, i.e. not so deep, and allowing for the thickness of the metal, the estimate of 40 baths or 1450 litres must be very nearly accurate (so Benzinger). The lavens were for washing such things as belonged to the burnt offering (Chron.).

39. *eastward*] The Temple was approached from the east. On this side also was the brasen (bronze) altar (2 K. xvi. 14).

40. *Hiram*] See the note on v. 13.

the lavens] Read with LXX. *the pots* as in v. 45. Cp. Exod. xxxviii. 3; and 2 Chr. iv. 11 a. In Exod. xxvii. 3 the *pots* ('pans' A.V.) are to be used for taking away the ashes and fat from the altar.

40 b—47 (= 2 Chr. iv. 11 b—18). SUMMARY OF THE WORKS OF HIRAM IN BRONZE.

41—44. *the two pillars...the twelve oxen*] The numerals are misplaced in the E.V. throughout this enumeration of the works of Hiram; we should read: *Pillars two, and the bowls...on the top of the pillars two, and...the oxen, twelve, &c.*

41. *bowls of the chapiters*] The *chapiters* (capitals) were in the form of bowls.

networks] See vv. 17, 18.

42. *pomegranates*] See v. 20.

45. *the pots*] See v. 40.

and the basons: even all ¹ these vessels, which Hiram made for king Solomon, in the house of the LORD, were of burnished brass. In the plain of Jordan did the king cast them, ⁴⁶ in the clay ground between Succoth and Zarethan. And ⁴⁷ Solomon left all the vessels *unweighed*, because they were exceeding many: the weight of the brass ² could not be found out. And Solomon made all the vessels that were in the ⁴⁸ house of the LORD: the golden altar, and the table whereupon the shewbread was, of gold; and the candlesticks, five ⁴⁹.

¹ Another reading is, *the vessels of the Tent*

² Or, *was not searched out*

the basons] Heb. *mizrahōth*. In these the blood of the victims was received that it might be cast against the altar. Cp. Exod. xxiv. 6.

all these vessels] The Kéthib has *all the vessels* [of] *the Tent*, i.e. of the Tent of Meeting (viii. 4, note).

burnished] The same Heb. epithet is used of a sword in Ezek. xxi. 10 [15]. 'It is *furished* that it may glitter' (A.V.; 'be as lightning' R.V.).

⁴⁶ *the plain of Jordan*] The *Plain* (usually with capital P in R.V.) or *Circle* (Heb. *Kikkar*) of Jordan is the name of the district in which Sodom and Gomorrah once stood (Gen. xiii. 10; xix. 17). This district was co-extensive with part of the great Jordan valley.

did the king cast them] i.e. had them cast.

in the clay ground] LXX. ἐν τῷ πᾶσι τῆς γῆς. Similarly 2 Chr. iv. 17 (Heb. and LXX.). Such a spot was convenient because the moulds in which the vessels were cast were made of clay. Clay was worked in the Jordan valley (G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*, p. 488). Some critics however make a slight change in the Heb. reading, and render, *at the ford of Adamah*. This ford is not mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament, but in Jos. iii. 16 (Heb., not LXX.) a city *Adam* is spoken of *beside Zarethan*; and at the present day the name 'Bridge of ed-Damieh' marks an ancient crossing place over which the road to Succoth may have passed. Unfortunately all we know of the position of Succoth is that it was east of Jordan (Jud. viii. 4, 5), and of Zarethan only that it was near the Jordan. Even the reading *Zarethan* is not quite certain, for 2 Chr. iv. 17 has *Zeredah*. It is better therefore not to give up the reading *the clay ground*.

48—51 (= 2 Chr. iv. 19—v. 1). THE VESSELS OF GOLD.

THE COMPLETION OF THE WORK.

48. *the golden altar*] Cp. vi. 20. This was the altar of incense (Exod. xxx. 1—7).

the table] Cp. Exod. xxv. 23—30.

shewbread] Exod. xxv. 30, R.V. marg. 'Or, *Presence-bread*' (LXX. ἀπροι ἐρωπλου). Here LXX. has a freer rendering, οὐ ἀπροι τῆς

on the right side, and five on the left, before the oracle, of pure gold; and the flowers, and the lamps, and the tongs, of gold; and the cups, and the snuffers, and the basons, and the spoons, and the firepans, of pure gold; and the hinges, both for the doors of the inner house, the most holy place, and for the doors of the house, *to wit*, of the temple, of gold. Thus all the work that king Solomon wrought in the house of the LORD was finished. And Solomon brought in the things which David his father had dedicated, *even* the silver, and the gold, and the vessels, and put them in the treasuries of the house of the LORD.

προσφορᾶν, the loaves of the offering. In Chron. ἀποι προσλαωι, as in Mark ii. 26.

49. *candlesticks*] Heb. *mēnōrōth*, LXX. *λυχνίας*. These were lamp-stands holding the *nērōth*, 'lamps,' LXX. *λύχνους*. Cp. Exod. xl. 4; Zech. iv. 2. From Exod. xxxvii. 17—23; Zech. iv. 2, we may perhaps conclude that the candlesticks were of seven branches, i.e. of six-branches proper and one central stem (like the candlestick of the Second Temple shewn on the Arch of Titus) and that they carried seven lamps each.

the oracle] See vi. 16, note.

pure gold] See vi. 20, note.

the flowers] These were ornaments on the candlesticks (Exod. xxxvii. 19).

the tongs] The same Heb. word as in Isa. vi. 6.

50. *the basons*] Cp. v. 45 (note).

the most holy place, and...the temple] i.e. the inner apartment and the outer hall of which the House was composed. Cp. vi. 16, 17; Heb. ix. 2, 3. The first named is the Holy of Holies (*Ἁγία ἁγίων*), the second is the Holy place (*Ἁγία*).

51. *the things which David...had dedicated*] Cp. 2 Sam. viii. 10, 11. The use which was sometimes made of these treasures is recorded in xv. 18 ff.; 2 K. xvi. 7, 8; xviii. 14—16.

CH. VIII. 1—11 (= 2 Chr. v. 2—14). THE ARK BROUGHT INTO THE TEMPLE.

This section (viii. 1—11) contains some repetitions (cp. *vv.* 2, 3 with *vv.* 1, 4), and is clearly of composite authorship. The narrative in its older form has been supplemented, perhaps more than once. Thus in v. 2 to 'the month Ethanim' is added the gloss 'which is the seventh month,' and similarly in v. 6 the words 'into the oracle of the house' are explained by the addition 'to the most holy place.' Furthermore

in *v.* 1, 4, 5 there occur phrases which are characteristic of the Priestly Code, i.e. of the most recent stratum of the Hexateuch; such are 'heads of the tribes,' 'princes of the fathers' houses,' 'the priests and the Levites,' 'all the congregation (Heb. *'edah*) of Israel.' Language like this points to the time of the exile, if not to the post-exilic period, while on the other hand the use of the term 'unto this day' in *v.* 8 suggests a date before the spoliation of the temple by the Chaldeans.

The text of LXX. is much shorter than the present Hebrew text, and is free from most of the clauses which seem to be interpolations in the original text. It runs as follows:—

'Then Solomon assembled all the elders of Israel in Zion to bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord from the city of David (this is Zion) in the month Athamin (Ethanlm). And the priests took up the ark and the tabernacle of the testimony and the holy vessels that were in the tabernacle of the testimony; and the king and all Israel sacrificed (*thorres*) before the ark sheep, oxen, without number.'

It can hardly be doubted that LXX. offers the earlier text, particularly in containing no mention of the Levites in *v.* 4. But if we accept the Greek text in this last instance, the sole reference to these Temple servants contained in the book of Kings disappears. This accords with the view of many critics that the Levites as a class of simple assistants to the priests did not exist in early times. Certainly they seem not to be mentioned in the correct text of the earlier literature. 1 Sam. vi. 15*a* is probably a late interpolation, and in 2 Sam. xv. 24 (*all the Levites*) the text is in disorder, and it is probable that it originally ran, 'Lo, Zadok and Abiathar came bearing the ark.' There are no other references in the books of Samuel to the Levites. On the other hand in Chronicles, a much later book than Samuel or Kings, the Levites are frequently mentioned as a class of assistants to the priests. Their duties in the Second Temple (which was the Temple which the Chronicler knew) were to assist the priests with the sacrifices and meal-offerings and to act as singers and porters. The whole organisation of the Levites is attributed by the Chronicler to David himself (1 Chr. xxiii. 4—6, 27—32), mistakenly without doubt.

LXX. (see the prefatory note to chs. vii., viii.) gives the seven sections into which these chapters may be divided in an order different from that of the Hebrew. So in LXX. the account of the building of Solomon's own house immediately precedes that of the entry of the ark into the sanctuary. Further LXX. expands viii. 1 so as to define this order as the order of time: [*And it came to pass when Solomon had finished building the House of the Lord and his own house, after twenty years,*] then Solomon assembled, &c. But if Solomon began the Temple in his fourth year (vi. 1, Heb. and LXX.) and took seven years to build it, it is improbable that he waited thirteen years longer (ix. 10) before bringing the ark into its own place. It is more reasonable to suppose that the building of the palace is narrated before the dedication of the Temple in order to avoid interrupting the account of Solomon's different building operations in Jerusalem. The order is of subject, not of date.

8 Then Solomon assembled the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes, the princes of the fathers' houses of the children of Israel, unto king Solomon in Jerusalem, to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of the city of David, which is Zion. And all the men of Israel assembled themselves unto king Solomon at the feast, in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month. And all the elders of Israel came, and the priests took up the ark. And they brought up the ark of the LORD, and the tent of meeting,

1. *Then*] i.e. when the Temple was finished and the necessary vessels were deposited in it. Cp. vii. 51.

elders...heads...princes] Three classes are mentioned, (1) the *elders* of Solomon's council, (2) the *heads* of tribes, (3) the *princes* (or leaders) of divisions smaller than tribes.

to bring up the ark] Cp. 2 Sam. vi. 1-12, vii. 1, 2; Ps. cxxxii. 1-8. The Temple is regarded as a dwelling-place (on earth) for **JEHOVAH**; its purpose is to shelter the ark, the symbol of the Divine Presence.

the city of David, which is Zion] Cp. ii. 19; iii. 1; 2 Sam. v. 7. By *the city of David* is meant not Jerusalem as a whole, but Zion, a little fortress on the southern slope of the Temple Hill, which David took out of the hand of the Jebusites. This was the nucleus of the Jerusalem of later days. What was the extent of the Jerusalem of Solomon's day we do not know.

2. *at the feast*] This was the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev. xxiii. 34), held when all the work of harvest was over.

in the month Ethanim, which is the seventh month] In vi. 38 we read, *In the month Bul, which is the eighth month, was the house finished*. Thus there is a slight discrepancy between the two passages, though both agree in giving an autumn month as the date. It is possible, however, that, as the Feast of Tabernacles began on the fifteenth of the seventh month and lasted on this occasion for fourteen days (v. 65), i.e. till the end of the month, the earlier passage (vi. 38) reckons the completion of the temple by the completion of the dedication ceremony.

4. *the tent of meeting*] A.V. *the tabernacle of the congregation*. The reference is to the sanctuary-tent made by Moses in the wilderness. Cp. Exod. xxv. 22, xxix. 42, 43, xxxiii. 7. The Heb. word (*mō'ed*) means not an 'assembly' or 'congregation,' but the 'meeting' of two persons; the *tent of meeting* is the place where God meets either Israel as a whole or any individual Israelite who comes to seek Him. There is, however, no allusion to this Mosaic tent in the account of David's care for the ark given in 2 Sam. vi.; on the contrary the ark was placed by him in a tent of his own providing (2 Sam. vi. 17). Probably the Mosaic tent had disappeared long before, perhaps when the Philistines captured the ark (1 Sam. iv.). The reference here to the *tent of meeting* is due probably to the scribe who introduced the mention of the Levites into this verse. Cp. the introductory note to 1 Chr. xlii. 1-14 in the *Cambridge Bible*.

and all the holy vessels that were in the Tent; even these did the priests and the Levites bring up. And king Solomon and all the congregation of Israel, that were assembled unto him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be told nor numbered for multitude. And the priests brought in the ark of the covenant of the LORD unto its place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the cherubim. For the cherubim spread forth their wings over the place of the ark, and the cherubim covered the ark and the staves thereof above. And the staves were so long that the ends of the staves were seen from the holy place before the oracle; but they were not seen without: and there they are, unto this day. There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, when the LORD made a covenant with the children of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt. And it came to pass, when the priests were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud: for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

¹ Or, *they drew out the staves, so that &c.*

³ Or, *where*

^{5.} *could not be told*] An attempt to *tell* (i.e. 'count') is made in v. 63 perhaps by a later hand.

^{6.} *the oracle*] Cp. vi. 16, note.

^{7.} *covered*] The idea is of *screening* or *protecting*, not of simple *covering*.

^{8.} *unto this day*] This was written before the destruction of the temple by the Chaldeans.

^{9.} *nothing...save the two tables of stone*] The writer repels the suspicion that the ark contained any image or symbol; it held nothing but the tables on which the terms of the covenant between JEHOVAH and Israel were inscribed. Tacitus (*Hist.* v. 9) records that when Pompey entered the Temple he found 'a vacant seat and an empty shrine.'

at Horeb] So in Deut. v. 2 ('in Horeb'). The phrase in Exod. xix. 2 (cp. Exod. xix. 11, 18, 20, 23) is 'before the mount [Sinai].' *Horeb* and *Sinai* seem to be different names of the same locality used by different writers.

^{10.} *out of the holy place*] i.e. after depositing the ark in its place.

the cloud] Cp. Exod. xl. 34, 35; Isa. vi. 4; Luke ix. 34, 35. According to 2 Chr. v. 13 a great outburst of praise from the priestly trumpeters and Levitical singers immediately preceded the coming of the cloud.

12 Then spake Solomon, The LORD hath said that he
 13 would dwell in the thick darkness. I have surely built thee
 an house of habitation, a place for thee to dwell in for ever.
 14 And the king turned his face about, and blessed all the
 congregation of Israel: and all the congregation of Israel
 15 stood. And he said, Blessed be the LORD, the God of
 Israel, which spake with his mouth unto David my father,
 16 and hath with his hand fulfilled it, saying, Since the day
 that I brought forth my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose
 no city out of all the tribes of Israel to build an house, that
 my name might be there; but I chose David to be over my
 17 people Israel. Now it was in the heart of David my father

12, 13 (= 2 Chr. vi. 1, 2). SOLOMON'S CRV.

These verses are very obscure. They are absent from LXX. at this point, but they are preserved in a fuller form after v. 53. Making two changes of corrupt readings we may translate the Greek as follows:—

'Then Solomon spake concerning the house when he had finished building it,

The sun the LORD made known in heaven,

He bade it come forth from thick darkness and dwell there;

Establish (lit. Build) my house, to be a house meet for thyself,

That thou mayest dwell there for ever.

Behold, is not this written in the book of Jashar?'

The words of the quotation mean: 'It is JEHOVAH who has appointed a dwelling-place for the sun, let Him be pleased to appoint as an eternal dwelling-place for Himself this House which Solomon has built!'

This text is to be preferred to the Hebrew as yielding fair sense, but it is plain that both the Heb. text and the Greek have suffered some corruption.

14—21 (= 2 Chr. vi. 3—11. Cp. 2 Sam. vii. 1—13). SOLOMON'S WORDS TO THE PEOPLE.

15. *Blessed be the LORD*] A frequent form of thanksgiving (i. 48; v. 7; 1 Sam. xxv. 32, 39; 2 Sam. xviii. 28).

16. *I chose no city &c.*] The meaning apparently is that God chose the man (David), and the man chose the city (Jerusalem). In Chronicles, however, the text is fuller, *I have chosen Jerusalem...and have chosen David*. The shorter text preserved in Kings is more probably original; JEHOVAH chose Jerusalem mediately, through David.

that my name might be there] Cp. v. 5 (note).

to be over] LXX. τοῦ ἐπὶ ἐπὶ. The word *king* is avoided as having a 'secular' sound. Cp. i. 35 (note).

17. *it was in the heart of David*] Cp. v. 3; 2 Sam. vii. 1, 2. In 1 Chr. xxii. it is said that David chose the Temple site, and collected workmen and materials for the building.

to build an house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. But the LORD said unto David my father, Whereas 18 it was in thine heart to build an house for my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart: nevertheless thou shalt 19 not build the house; but thy son that shall come forth out of thy loins, he shall build the house for my name. And 20 the LORD hath established his word that he spake; for I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised, and have built the house for the name of the LORD, the God of Israel. And 21 there have I set a place for the ark, wherein is the covenant of the LORD, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Egypt.

19. *thou shalt not build*] Cp. v. 3, note.

21. *wherein is the covenant of the LORD*] Cp. v. 9, note.

22—53 (22—50 = 2 Chr. vi. 12—39). SOLOMON'S PRAYER.

This passage is a Prayer for all Conditions of Men, as the following analysis of its contents sufficiently shews:—

vv. 23—26. For the Royal Family.

27—32. That God may acknowledge the House by accepting the prayer made towards it, and by taking note of the oath made in it.

33, 34. Under Defeat.

35, 36. In Drought.

37—40. Under other calamities.

41—43. For the acceptance of the Stranger's prayer.

44, 45. In time of War.

46—50. In Captivity.

51—53. Conclusion.

It is highly improbable that this prayer in its present form is the work of Solomon. Its language resembles that of Deuteronomy, a book which belongs to a later age than Solomon's. Moreover some of the thoughts have their closest parallels in prophetic writings, such as Ezekiel and Isaiah xl.—lxvi., which belong to the period of the Exile and the Return. But the prayer is not homogeneous, on the contrary it shews signs of having been expanded. It may therefore be ultimately based on some prayer used in the Temple in the time of the Kings, though the main redaction belongs to Deuteronomic times. Public Prayers are usually (witness the Book of Common Prayer) the result of a long process of revision and augmentation carried on to satisfy the needs of successive generations. If the origin of the Temple Prayer was forgotten in process of time, Solomon may have been singled out as its author, because the building of the Temple itself was his work.

With regard to the character of the prayer it is noteworthy that all

22 And Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the congregation of Israel, and spread forth
 23 his hands toward heaven: and he said, O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no God like thee, in heaven above, or on earth beneath; who keepest covenant and mercy¹ with thy
 24 servants, that walk before thee with all their heart: who hast

¹ Or, *for*.

stress is laid, as in Deuteronomy, on the efficacy of an appointed place of prayer, while nothing is said of the efficacy of particular times of prayer. The three yearly feasts are not noticed, and of sacrifices nothing whatever is said. JEHOVAH is spoken of as a God whom even the heavens cannot contain, who yet knows the heart of the individual man. He is by covenant the God of Israel, yet non-Israelites will be drawn from far to worship him. It should be noted lastly that nothing is said in this prayer (cp. v. 48) regarding the ultimate fate of the Temple: contrast ix. 7, 8. The prayer has a universal character; it is fitted for more than one age.

22—26 (= 2 Chr. vi. 12—17). HE PLEADS THE PROMISE MADE TO DAVID.

22. *stood*] In v. 54 and in 2 Chr. vi. 13 it is explained that the king *kneeled down upon his knees*. Standing was, however, a recognised position in prayer (cp. Exod. xvii. 9 and 12) both in Israel and among the Babylonians, Egyptians, and Assyrians, on whose reliefs figures standing in prayer are often shewn, and it may be that the fuller reading is due to a later gloss.

spread forth his hands] Cp. Exod. ix. 33; Isa. i. 15. Egyptian reliefs shew the worshipper holding his hands widely apart with upturned palms. This was doubtless the manner in Israel also. Cp. Exod. xvii. 12.

toward heaven] Although God's presence in the Temple is recognised (v. 11), the higher truth that earth cannot contain Him is never lost sight of throughout this prayer (vv. 30, 31, 34, etc.).

23. *there is no God like thee*] The Hebrews, even those of them who were more advanced in knowledge of spiritual truth, constantly used language implying that the gods of the heathen actually existed. Cp. Ps. xcvi. 3; xcvi. 4.

in heaven above] Cp. Deut. iv. 39.

who keepest covenant and mercy for...] So marg. The phrase is found in Deut. vii. 9. *Covenant and mercy* is an instance of Hendiadys; it stands for *the covenant of mercy*.

with all their heart] A phrase in the spirit of the writer of Deuteronomy, who constantly sets forth an ideal of 'inwardness' in religion. Cp. v. 48, note.

kept with thy servant David my father that which thou didst promise him: yea, thou spakest with thy mouth, and hast fulfilled it with thine hand, as it is this day. Now therefore, 25 O LORD, the God of Israel, keep with thy servant David my father that which thou hast promised him, saying, ¹There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Israel; if only thy children take heed to their way, to walk before me as thou hast walked before me. Now therefore, 26 O God of Israel, let thy word, I pray thee, be verified, which thou spakest unto thy servant David my father. But will 27 God in very deed dwell on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house that I have builded! Yet have thou respect unto 28 the prayer of thy servant, and to his supplication, O LORD my God, to hearken unto the cry and to the prayer which thy servant prayeth before thee this day: that thine eyes 29 may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place whereof thou hast said, My name shall be there:

¹ Heb. *There shall not be cut off unto thee a man from my sight.*

25. *There shall not fail thee*] Cp. II. 4.

to walk before me] Cp. the phrase '[Enoch] walked with God' (Gen. v. 24). The general idea of both phrases is *to live a life acceptable to God.*

26. *thy word*] i.e. thy promise.

be verified] Lit., *be made Amen*; *Amen* being a Heb. adjective signifying 'faithful, sure.'

27—30 (= 2 Chr. vi. 18—21). PETITION THAT PRAYER MADE TOWARDS THE TEMPLE MAY BE HEARD.

27. *dwell on the earth*] LXX. adds, *with men* (so 2 Chr. vi. 18). Cp. v. 22 (note on *toward heaven*); also Isa. lxvi. 1.

28. *cry*] Or, *loud cry.*

29. *that thine eyes may be open*] A bold anthropomorphism. Cp. 2 K. xix. 16. The expression implies not perception only, but favour also. Cp. v. 52.

toward this house] This language does not imply that JHROVAH dwells on earth, but only that the house is a sign of God's presence among men. Cp. v. 27.

night] Prayer was made by night in the Temple. Cp. Ps. cxxxiv. 1, 2. For the order *night and day*, cp. Gen. i. 5. The Hebrew day begins at 6 p.m.

to hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall pray
 30 toward this place. And hearken thou to the supplication of
 thy servant, and of thy people Israel, when they shall pray
 toward this place: yea, hear thou in heaven thy dwelling
 31 place; and when thou hearest, forgive. ¹If a man sin
 against his neighbour, and an oath be laid upon him to
 cause him to swear, and he come *and* swear before thine
 32 altar in this house: then hear thou in heaven, and do, and
 judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way
 upon his own head; and justifying the righteous, to give him
 33 according to his righteousness. When thy people Israel be
 smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned

¹ Or, *Whereinsoever a man shall sin*

toward this place]. Such language is in accordance with the Deuteronomic teaching, 'One Sanctuary and One God.' Cp. Deut. xii. 1—18.

30. *in heaven thy dwelling place*] Rather, *towards the place of thy dwelling, [even] towards heaven*. The words *towards heaven* are emphatic; the meaning is, 'Let not the prayer be weighed down earthwards, but let it ascend heavenwards, towards the very presence of God Himself.' To reject *towards heaven* as a gloss and to suppose that *towards the place of thy dwelling* means *towards the temple*, is to alter the text against the authority of LXX., and to sacrifice the emphatic words of the clause without compensation. Cp. Deut. xxvi. 15, *from thy holy habitation, from heaven*.

31, 32 (=2 Chr. vi. 22, 23). ORDEAL BY OATH.

31. *If a man sin against his neighbour*] It appears from Exod. xxii. 7—11 that the meaning here is, *If a man cause (or, seem to cause) his neighbour a loss*. The regulation in Exodus concerns loss or damage in the case of property left on deposit with a neighbour. It is laid down in Exodus (*l.c.*) that in such cases, provided that no witness is available, the suspected person may clear himself by an oath of purgation or imprecation upon himself taken 'before God,' declaring his innocence and invoking judgement upon himself, if he should perjure himself.

before thine altar] The later Jews apparently changed *swearing before* into *swearing by* the altar, and regarded the oath so made as less rigidly binding (Matt. xxiii. 18—20).

32. *his way*] i.e. his conduct, manner of life. Cp. Gen. vi. 12; Ps. cxix. 9; Ezek. iii. 18.

33, 34 (=2 Chr. vi. 24, 25). PRAYER UNDER DEFEAT.

33. *When . . . be smitten down . . . because they have sinned*] *Whenssoever . . . is smitten down . . . because they sin*. The verbs in this verse are frequentatives.

against thee; if they turn again to thee, and confess thy name, and pray and make supplication unto thee in this house: then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy 34 people Israel, and bring them again unto the land which thou gavest unto their fathers. When heaven is shut up, 35 and there is no rain, because they have sinned against thee; if they pray toward this place, and confess thy name, and turn from their sin, ¹when thou ²dost afflict them: then hear 36 thou in heaven, and forgive the sin of thy servants, and of thy people Israel, ¹when thou teachest them the good way wherein they should walk; and send rain upon thy land, which thou hast given to thy people for an inheritance. If 37 there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, if there be blasting or mildew, locust or caterpillar; if their enemy

¹ Or, because

² Or, answerest

confess thy name] Probably what is meant is a confession of the character of God as merciful towards the sinful. In v. 35 the fuller phrase is given, *Confess thy name, and turn from their sin*. The same Heb. verb (*hōdāh*) is found in the well-known refrain found in Ps. cxviii. 1; cxxxvi. 1, which might be re-rendered, *Confess to JEHOVAH that He is good; that His mercy endureth for ever*. Cp. Kyle's note on Ezra x. 11 in the *Cambridge Bible*.

34. *and bring them again*] In vv. 33, 34^a there is no reference to captivity, but only to *defeat*. Moreover the phrase *in this house* (v. 33) directly excludes the thought of captivity. Probably 34^b has been transferred by mistake from the end of v. 50, where it is needed to complete the sense.

35, 36 (= 2 Chr. vi. 26, 27). PRAYER IN DROUGHT.

35. *When*] *Whenever*. Cp. v. 33, note.

when thou dost afflict them] So LXX. The difference between this rendering and that of the margin, *because thou answerest them*, depends on the vowel points. The Hebrew consonantal text might be translated either way.

36. *of thy servants*] LXX. has *of thy servant* (sing.) in reference to Solomon himself, as in v. 30.

when thou teachest] Better, *for thou wilt teach*. God's forgiveness will be shown by the clearer teaching of the *right way* which He will give to His people.

37-40 (= 2 Chr. vi. 28-31). PRAYER IN THE MIDST OF OTHER CALAMITIES.

37. *blasting*] Blasting is the result produced on vegetation in Palestine by the blowing of the 'east wind' (Gen. xli. 6; Hos. xiii. 15),

besiege them in the land of their ¹ cities; whatsoever plague,
 38 whatsoever sickness there be; what prayer and supplication
 soever be made by any man, *or* by all thy people Israel,
 which shall know every man the plague of his own heart,
 39 and spread forth his hands toward this house: then hear
 thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and forgive, and do, and
 render unto every man according to all his ways, whose
 heart thou knowest; (for thou, even thou only, knowest the

¹ Heb. *gates*

the well-known *Scirocco*, or *Sherkiyeh*. . . 'The name is used of all winds blowing in from the desert—east, south-east, south, and even south-south-west.... They come with a mist of fine sand, veiling the sun, scorching vegetation, and bringing languor and fever to men' (G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*, p. 67). In Luke xii. 55 the same kind of wind is spoken of as a south wind (*νότο*).

[*locust or caterpillar*] Heb. *arbeh*...*hāsīl*. Both words are different names for locusts, describing perhaps different species. *Arbeh* means perhaps 'swarmer,' and *hāsīl* 'finisher,' both expressive names. See Driver's note on Joel i. 4 in the *Cambridge Bible*.

[*if their enemy besiege them*] Rather, *if his enemy afflict him*; so LXX. The reference, as *v.* 38 ('every man the plague of his own heart') shews, is to injuries inflicted by private enemies. The calamities of war have been already referred to in *v.* 33.

[*in the land of their cities*] Lit., *in the land of his gates*, i.e. (if the text be sound) 'in his own land.' The phrase emphasizes the fact that a private, not public, enemy is meant. But perhaps we should read (cp. LXX.) *within any of his* (i.e. Israel's) *gates*. Cp. Ps. cxxvii. 5.

[*plague*] Lit., *blow*, i.e. any calamity sent as a sign of the Divine displeasure, not necessarily a *pestilence*; LXX. *συνάραγμα*. Thus the Prayer Book speaks of 'a plague of rain and waters.'

38. [*by any man, or by all thy people Israel*] Rather, *by any man of all thy people Israel*. The conjunction is not found in the Hebrew, and the second phrase is not found in LXX. and seems to be merely a gloss on the first. The gloss is no doubt correct, for 'mankind' here is limited to Israel. The case of the 'stranger' is dealt with in *vv.* 41—43.

[*toward this house*] A more accurate phrase than 'in this house' (*v.* 33), for the worshipper stood in the court facing the house.

39. [*and do*] Cp. Ps. cxix. 126, 'It is time for the LORD *to work*,' where the Heb. word is the same.

[*unto every man*] The emphasis laid on the religious significance of the individual is said to be characteristic of an age later than that of Solomon. Such emphasis is specially to be noted in Ezekiel (ch. xviii).

[*knowest the hearts*] Cp. 1 Sam. xvi. 7; Jer. xvii. 10.

hearts of all the children of men;) that they may fear thee 40
 all the days that they live in the land which thou gavest
 unto our fathers. Moreover concerning the stranger, that 41
 is not of thy people Israel, when he shall come out of a far
 country for thy name's sake; (for they shall hear of thy 42
 great name, and of thy mighty hand, and of thy stretched
 out arm;) when he shall come and pray toward this house;
 hear thou in heaven thy dwelling place, and do according to 43
 all that the stranger calleth to thee for; that all the peoples
 of the earth may know thy name, to fear thee, as doth thy
 people Israel, and that they may know that ¹this house
 which I have built is called by thy name. If thy people go 44
 out to battle against their enemy, by whatsoever way thou
 shalt send them, and they pray unto the LORD toward the
 city which thou hast chosen, and toward the house which

¹ Or, *thy name is called upon this house &c.*

40. *that they may fear thee*] This verse has a Deuteronomic ring.
 Cp. Deut. xii. 1; xiv. 23.

41—43 (= 2 Chr. vi. 32, 33). THE STRANGER'S PRAYER.

41. *the stranger*] The persons spoken of here are foreigners who
 join themselves to Israel and remain in the land as proselytes.
 Cp. Isa. lvi. 6, 7 (important); Zech. viii. 23. After the Return from
 the exile in Babylon such cases seem not to have been infrequent.

42. *mighty hand...stretched out arm*] Cp. Deut. iv. 34.

43. *that this house...is called by thy name*] The writer uses this
 cautious circumlocutionary phrase to avoid the anthropomorphism
 involved in the direct statement, 'This house is thy dwelling'; contrast
 v. 13. Such circumlocutions are characteristic of an age later than
 that of Solomon.

44, 45 (= 2 Chr. vi. 34, 35). PRAYER IN TIME OF WAR.

44. *If thy people go out*] A new case. Israel is not 'smitten' and
 driven back upon Jerusalem as in v. 33, but he is advancing against an
 enemy, perhaps invading an enemy's country. The double phrase,
toward the city...and toward the house, is the natural complement to
 the phrase *go out to battle*.

by whatsoever way thou shalt send them] Cp. Deut. xx. 1—4, where
 it is similarly assumed that war will be carried out under Divine
 sanction.

the city which thou hast chosen] Cp. v. 48. This phrase occurs
 in different forms eight times in the books of Kings, or nine times if we

45 I have built for thy name: then hear thou in heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their ¹cause.
 46 If they sin against thee, (for there is no man that sinneth not,) and thou be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that ²they carry them away captive unto the land
 47 of the enemy, far off or near; yet if they shall bethink themselves in the land whither they are carried captive, and turn again, and make supplication unto thee in the land of them that carried them captive, saying, We have sinned, and have
 48 done perversely, we have dealt wickedly; if they return unto thee with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies, which carried them captive, and pray unto thee toward their land, which thou gavest unto their fathers, the city which thou hast chosen, and the house which I have
 49 built for thy name: then hear thou their prayer and their supplication in heaven thy dwelling place, and maintain
 50 their ¹cause; and forgive thy people which have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have transgressed against thee; and give them ²compassion before

¹ Or, *right*

² Heb. *they that take them captive carry them away*

³ Heb. *to be for compassion*

count v. 16. In its fullest form it is found in ch. xiv. 21, 'Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to put his name there.' Cp. 2 K. xxi. 7. This form corresponds closely with that used in the great passage of the Law in which a single sanctuary for all Israel is prescribed, 'Unto the place which the LORD your God shall choose out of all your tribes to put his name there, even unto his habitation shall ye seek, and thither thou shalt come: and thither ye shall bring your burnt offerings, and your sacrifices,' &c. (Deut. xii. 5, 6). The ordinance of a single sanctuary is characteristic of Deuteronomy (Deut. xii. 11, 21; xiv. 23, 24; xv. 20; xvi. 2, 6, 11; xxvi. 2). In Deuteronomy Jerusalem is never named as the city chosen for God's sanctuary, but this identification is made in Kings, namely in xi. 13, 32, 36; xiv. 21; 2 K. xxi. 7; xxiii. 27.

45. *and maintain their cause*] Better, *and do them right* (marg.).

46—50 (= 2 Chr. vi. 36—39). PRAYER IN CAPTIVITY.

46. *or near*] Such as the land of Edom (Amos i. 6, 9).

48. *with all their heart and...soul*] A form of phrase common in Deuteronomy, e.g. iv. 29.

50. *give them compassion*] Rather, *make them objects of compassion*. The same phrase is found in Ps. cvi. 46 [446 P.-B. Version],

those who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them: for they be thy people, and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest forth out of Egypt, from the midst of the furnace of iron; that thine eyes may be open unto the supplication of thy servant, and unto the supplication of thy people Israel, to hearken unto them whensoever they cry unto thee. For thou didst separate them from among all the peoples of the earth, to be thine inheritance, as thou spakest by the hand of Moses thy servant, when thou broughtest our fathers out of Egypt, O Lord God.

And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the LORD, he arose from before the altar of the LORD, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread forth toward heaven. And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying, Blessed be the LORD, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his

¹ Heb. *fallen*

'he made all those that led them away captive to pity them' (P.-B. V.). The sense would be more complete if *v.* 34 *b*, which is out of place where it stands, were read here. Cp. note on *v.* 34.

51—53 (no parallel in 2 Chr. vi.). ISRAEL GOD'S PEOPLE.

51. *thy people, and thine inheritance*] A bold anthropomorphism underlies the expression *thine inheritance* (or *thy possession*). So in Deut. xxxii. 8, 9 JEHOVAH is represented as dividing up the nations and retaining Israel for Himself. Cp. Deut. iv. 19, 20; ix. 26, 29.

the furnace of iron] Better, **the iron furnace**, as in Jer. xi. 4. A furnace hot enough for smelting iron is meant.

52. *open*] Cp. *v.* 29, note.

54—61 (no parallel in 2 Chr. vi.). SOLOMON'S DIMISSORY BLESSING OF ISRAEL.

55. *blessed*] The solemn blessing of the people is assigned to the priests in Num. vi. 22—27, but it was also performed by laymen, e.g. by Joshua (Josh. xxii. 6) and by David (2 Sam. vi. 18).

56. *rest*] **a resting place**, Heb. *mēnūhāh* (Deut. xii. 9; Isa. xi. 10). The gift of Canaan to Israel is regarded as confirmed by the establishment of the House of JEHOVAH in it. Cp. Deut. xii. 9—12.

promise] Cp. Josh. xxi. 45.

57 servant. The LORD our God be with us, as he was with
 58 our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us: that he
 may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and
 to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judge-
 59 ments, which he commanded our fathers. And let these
 my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the
 LORD, be nigh unto the LORD our God day and night, that
 he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his
 60 people Israel, 'as every day shall require: that all the peoples
 of the earth may know that the LORD, he is God; there is
 61 none else. Let your heart therefore be perfect with the
 LORD our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his com-
 62 mandments, as at this day. And the king, and all Israel
 63 with him, offered sacrifice before the LORD. And Solomon
 offered for the sacrifice of peace offerings, which he offered
 unto the LORD, two and twenty thousand oxen, and an
 hundred and twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all
 the children of Israel dedicated the house of the LORD.
 64 The same day did the king hallow the middle of the court

¹ Heb. *the thing of a day in its day*

58. *inclines our hearts*] For the doctrine that God inclines men's hearts either towards Himself or away from Himself, cp. xviii. 37 (where two opposing renderings are given in R.V.); Isa. lxiii. 17. *commandments...statutes...judgements*] Cp. ii. 3, note.

59. *as every day shall require*] Literally, *the thing of a day in its day*. The phrase may be rendered very differently according to the context in which it occurs, e.g. Exod. v. 13 (your *daily tasks*); xvi. 4 (a *day's portion*).

60. *all the peoples*] Cp. v. 43.

there is none else] Cp. Deut. iv. 35, 39.

61. *perfect with the LORD*] Cp. xi. 4. The phrase means *undivided in the service of the One True God*.

62—66 (=2 Chr. vii. 4—10). THE SACRIFICES OF CONSECRATION.

63. *peace offerings*] Cp. iii. 15, note. Here perhaps *offerings in fulfilment of a vow* are meant. Solomon may have vowed a certain number of sacrifices on the completion of the Temple.

and an hundred and twenty thousand sheep] These words are omitted in LXX. (B) perhaps by homœoteleuton. According to v. 5 the sheep and oxen that were sacrificed 'could not be numbered.'

64. *did...hallow the middle of the court*] Apparently the portions of the sacrifices which belonged 'to the LORD' were burnt in a great fire in the Court and not upon the altar.

that was before the house of the LORD; for there he offered the burnt offering, and the meal offering, and the fat of the peace offerings: because the brasen altar that was before the LORD was too little to receive the burnt offering, and the meal offering, and the fat of the peace offerings. So Solomon held 65 the feast at that time, and all Israel with him, a great congregation, from the entering in of Hamath unto the brook of Egypt, before the LORD our God, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days. On the eighth day he sent the people 66 away, and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents

meal offering] A meal offering consisted of fine flour mixed with oil and frankincense. It was offered sometimes as a dough, and sometimes as a cake. Part was burned on the altar; the rest was for the priests. Such was the meal-offering as described in Lev. ii. 1—13, but the usage was perhaps somewhat different in the time of Solomon. Similar offerings, cakes called *kaṭwānīm*, were made to the *Queen of Heaven* (Astarte?) by idolatrous Jewish women (Jer. vii. 18; xlv. 19).

the fat] This as the choice part was always to be offered by burning; other parts of the victim were eaten either by the worshipper and his family or by the priests. Cp. Exod. xxiii. 18; 1 Sam. ii. 15, 16.

65. *the feast*] Cp. v. 2, note.

the entering in of Hamath] Hamath, the modern Hama, on the Orontes nearly a hundred miles north of Damascus, was of course outside the Promised Land. The *Entering in* (or *Approach*) of Hamath is to be identified with the Bekā'a, the district where the valley of the Orontes opens out into a plain between the Lebanon and the Anti-Libanus. This is described as the Northern limit of the Promised Land (Num. xiii. 21; Josh. xiii. 5). It was probably lost soon after the death of Solomon and not recovered until the time of Jeroboam II. (2 K. xiv. 25).

the brook of Egypt] *Brook* is the usual translation of the Heb. *Nahal*, Arab. *Wādī*. It means a watercourse, often very deep and wide and with precipitous banks. Such a watercourse is often dry in summer. Cp. xvii. 3, note. The *brook* intended here is the Wadi el Arish which forms the border between Egypt and Palestine. In 1 Chr. xiii. 5 it is called 'Shihor the brook of Egypt.'

seven days and seven days] The feast was repeated for the sake of those who could not find room for themselves on the first occasion. LXX. has *seven days* simply.

66. *On the eighth day*] i.e. in each case, for the feast and for the supplementary feast.

unto their tents] The Heb. word for 'tent' (*ōhel*) here approaches in meaning the corresponding Arabic word (*ahl*) which denotes a man's household or his own people.

joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the LORD had shewed unto David his servant, and to Israel his people.

9 And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished the building of the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all Solomon's¹ desire which he was pleased to do, that the LORD appeared to Solomon the second time, as he had appeared unto him at Gibeon. And the LORD said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually. And as for thee, if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked,

¹ Or, *delight*

CH. IX. 1—9 (= 2 Chr. vii. 11—22). THE ANSWER IN A VISION TO SOLOMON'S PRAYER.

This section stands in closest relation to viii. 22—53 (Solomon's Prayer), and its language bears similar clear traces of the influence of the book of Deuteronomy. It can hardly be doubted that both viii. 22—53 and ix. 1—9 come from the editor of Kings himself, and not from the royal annals of Solomon's day. The two passages are to be compared with the speeches which ancient historians sometimes composed and put into the mouths of the great men whose careers they describe. Such speeches are founded upon a historical situation and illustrate the condition of affairs on particular occasions, but they are not themselves historical in the sense of being drawn from contemporary reports. Similarly the Prayer of Solomon and the Answer to it, as they stand here, are not to be thought of as verbally accurate reports, for they plainly use the language and express the thoughts of a later time, yet they are based on a historical situation, and they agree in substance with that situation and its subsequent developments.

1. *and all Solomon's desire*] The same Heb. word as in v. 19, 'and that which Solomon *desired* to build for his pleasure in Jerusalem.' The phrase is equivalent to *et cetera*.

2. *at Gibeon*] In a dream; see iii. 5 ff.

3. *I have hallowed*] The same Heb. word as in viii. 64. Man hallows with sacrifices and prayers, God hallows by acceptance.

so put my name there] A Deuteronomic phrase (Deut. xii. 5, 21).

mine eyes &c.] The phrase suggests attention and care. Cp. Gen. xliv. 21; Deut. xi. 12.

perpetually] Lit., *all the days*, as in Matt. xxviii. 20, marg.; the meaning is 'through all times of good or ill.'

4. *if thou wilt walk &c.*] The same promise is more briefly given in: vi. 12.

in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgements; then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom over Israel for ever; according as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel. But if ye shall turn away from following me, ye or your children, and not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but shall go and serve other gods, and worship them: then will I cut off Israel out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have hallowed for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Israel shall be a proverb and a byword among all peoples: and though this house be so high, yet shall every one that passeth by it be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, Why hath the LORD done thus unto this land, and to this house? And they shall

¹ Or, *spake concerning*

² Or, *and this house shall be high; every one &c.*

as David...in integrity of heart] i.e. with whole-hearted service, without turning aside to the worship of other gods. Cp. iii. 3; xi. 4.

^{5.} *There shall not fail &c.]* See ii. 4, note.

^{6.} *go and serve other gods, and worship them]* This is Deuteronomic language (Deut. xxix. 26).

^{7.} *a proverb and a byword]* Cp. Deut. xxviii. 37; Jer. xxiv. 9, 'a reproach and a proverb, a byword and a curse.' The Heb. word *māshāl* translated here 'proverb' (so also Prov. i. 1; x. 1; *al.*) and 'parable' in Isa. xiv. 4 means 'a moralising reflection, a moral,' sometimes expressed in a single sentence, sometimes in a poem of several verses. The poem called *māshāl* in Isa. xiv. 4 (cp. Num. xxi. 27 ff.) is a satire on the fallen greatness of the king of Babylon. Cp. the concluding couplet of Johnson's satire on the career of Charles XII. of Sweden:

'He left the name, at which the world grew pale,

To point a moral (*māshāl*) or adorn a tale.'

^{8.} *and though this house be so high, yet shall every one...be astonished]* Lit. (see marg.) *and this house shall be high; every one...shall be astonished.* Probably 'elyōn 'high' is a euphemistic disguise for *l'iyīm* 'for ruins.' The original text 'This house shall become ruins' has been changed to 'This house shall be high,' in order to avoid words of ill omen, just as in the Heb. text of xxi. 10 'Thou didst curse God' has been changed into 'Thou didst bless God.' Pesh. *This house shall be desolate;* Targ. *This house which was high shall be desolate.*

shall hiss] i.e. shall give a whistle of astonishment, 'a long low sibilation,' in Tennyson's phrase.

answer, Because they forsook the LORD their God, which brought forth their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and laid hold on other gods, and worshipped them, and served them: therefore hath the LORD brought all this evil upon them.

10 And it came to pass at the end of twenty years, wherein Solomon had built the two houses, the house of the LORD
11 and the king's house, (now Hiram the king of Tyre had furnished Solomon with cedar trees and fir trees, and with gold, according to all his desire,) that then king Solomon
12 gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. And Hiram

9. *laid hold on*] The same Heb. word as in Prov. iii. 18 '[Wisdom] is a tree of life to them that *lay hold upon her*'; and in Isa. xxvii. 5. The idea is of holding something with resolution.

10—X. 29. VARIOUS NOTICES CONCERNING THE ACTS OF SOLOMON.

This section consists of a number of detached notices of Solomon's reign not arranged in any definite order. It seems very probable from a comparison with LXX. that the text has suffered by interpolation and in other ways. The order of the Greek in ch. ix. is, *v.* 24 (Pharaoh's daughter), *vv.* 10—14 (Hiram), *vv.* 26—28 (Hiram again); *vv.* 15—23; 25 are omitted. LXX. thus brings together the two paragraphs concerning Hiram which the Heb. text separates. The omitted verses (except 16) are given in the Greek between x. 22 and x. 23, a place equally well suited for them. In ch. x. both in Heb. and LXX. *vv.* 11, 12 break awkwardly into the story of the visit of the Queen of Sheba.

The whole section is written as a kind of panegyric on Solomon's reign; notice, e.g. the exemption of Israel from bond-service (ix. 22), the spices from Sheba (x. 10), the abundance of gold (*v.* 21), and of cedars (*v.* 27). The age of Solomon was a golden age in the eyes of the later Hebrews, and the facts presented in ch. xi. are needed to correct the idealised picture given in chs. iv., ix., and x.

10—14 (cp. 2 Chr. viii. 1, 2). HIRAM'S TRANSACTIONS WITH SOLOMON. THE LAND OF CABUL.

10. *twenty years*] Cp. vi. 37, 38; vii. 1.

11. *gave Hiram*] Not in payment for the building materials supplied by Hiram, for they were paid for otherwise (*v.* 10, 11). The cities were purchased from Solomon at the considerable price of 120 talents of gold (*v.* 14). Hiram no doubt desired more land of his own on which to grow food for his household (*v.* 9), and Solomon after 20 years of amity with Tyre consented to sell twenty cities, but it was evidently grudgingly done.

came out from Tyre to see the cities which Solōmon had given him; and they pleased him not. And he said, What ¹³ cities are these which thou hast given me, my brother? And ¹⁴ he called them the land of Cabul, unto this day. And Hiram sent to the king sixscore talents of gold. ¹⁴

And this is the ²reason of the levy which king Solomon ¹⁵ raised; for to build the house of the LORD, and his own house, and Millo, and the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, and Megiddo, and Gezer. Pharaoh king of Egypt had gone ¹⁶

¹ Or, *they were called*

² Or, *account*

Galilee] In the Old Testament *Galilee* denotes the country about Kedesh, i.e. a small district of Naphtali. The Galilee of the New Testament was far more extensive. Cp. Josh. xx. 7; 2 K. xv. 29; Isa. ix. 1 [viii. 23].

^{12. they pleased him not}] The Chronicler, who evidently disliked the transaction and abbreviates the account of it, understands too hastily from these words that Hiram refused the cities. He accordingly speaks of them as the cities which Hiram gave to Solomon (2 Chr. viii. 2), but this language is misleading in its brevity.

^{13. he called them}] Better as marg., *they were called*.

Cabul] It has been thought that the name was given by Hiram and that it bears a depreciatory signification. But the meaning of the word is unknown, and the rendering, *he [Hiram] called them*, is quite uncertain.

^{14. sixscore}] Six and its multiples were used among the Hebrews and Babylonians just as *ten* and its multiples are used among us; i.e. they were treated as 'round numbers.' Cp. v. 28, *four hundred and twenty* (60 × 7); x. 10, *a hundred and twenty* (60 × 2); 14, *six hundred threescore and six* (6 × 111); 16, *six hundred* (60 × 10); 29, *six hundred* (60 × 10).

15—23 (17—23 = 2 Chr. viii. 4—10). CITIES BUILT BY TASK-WORK.

This section is missing from LXX. (B), but is found in codex A.

^{15. the reason}] Better as marg., *the account*.

the levy] Cp. iv. 6, note.

Millo] Usually called *the Millo*, which means perhaps 'the filling up' (v. 24; xi. 27; 2 Sam. v. 9). The *Millo* was probably a wall with towers which filled up a gap which had previously existed in the defences built by David.

Hazor] In Naphtali on the northern border of Israel (Josh. xi. 1; Jud. iv. 2).

Megiddo] Cp. iv. 12, note.

Gezer] The site of this city has been discovered almost due west of Jerusalem at Tell-el-Jezer, and confirmed by an inscription in Hebrew

up, and taken Gezer, and burnt it with fire, and slain the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and given it for a portion
 17 unto his daughter, Solomon's wife. And Solomon built
 18 Gezer, and Beth-horon the nether, and Baalath, and Tamar

¹ Another reading is, *Tadmor* Sq 2 Chr. viii. 4.

lēhūm Gezer, 'the boundary of Gezer,' found on a rock by the roadside. The excavations of the Palestine Exploration Fund (*Quarterly Statements*, 1902—1905) at this place have brought to light remains of various ages in eight different strata, some of very great antiquity, reaching, it has been said, into the third millenium B.C. The earliest definite date however in the history of the city seems to be the time of Amenhotep III. of Egypt, and agreeably with this the Tell-el-Amarna tablets shew that Gezer was under Egyptian rule as early as about 1400 B.C., i.e. probably before the Israelite conquest of Canaan. After this date Egyptian authority declined in Palestine, and it is recorded in Jud. i. 29 that the Canaanites maintained themselves in Gezer though surrounded by the Ephraimites. A very large number of Egyptian objects, principally scarabs, have been found during the excavations. In the time of the Maccabees Gazara (i.e. Gezer) was fortified by the Syrians in order to keep Judah in subjection, but it passed later into the hands of the Maccabees (1 Macc. ix. 52; xiii. 53).

16. *Pharaoh*] Cp. iii. 1, note.

a portion] i.e. a dowry. Heb. *shillūhim*, 'parting gifts.'

17. *Beth-horon the nether*] The two Beth-horons (Upper and Lower) commanded an important ancient road leading from the north-west to Jerusalem.

18. *Baalath*] A city of (the southern) Dan, not far from Beth-horon. Cp. Josh. xix. 44.

Tamar] The reading of the name is uncertain. The Heb. text (*Kēthib*) has T-M-R which may be read *Tamar*, though other pronunciations are possible. The Heb. margin (*Kēri*) has *Tadmor*, a reading possibly derived from Chron. The choice is between *Tamar* and *Tadmor*, the former in the south of Judah near the southern end of the Dead Sea, the latter (identified with *Palmyra*) on an oasis north-east of Damascus, half-way between Damascus and the Euphrates. A decision is difficult. The description *in the wilderness* suits both cities equally well. In favour of *Tamar* may be urged the further description *in the land*, i.e. 'in the land of Israel,' unless the words be a gloss. Against *Tadmor* it is urged that no such city is mentioned (except in a doubtful reading of this passage and its parallel in Chron.) until circ. 34 B.C. when Mark Antony threatened it with attack. But such an argument from silence is very precarious. All that can be said is that the text in Kings is highly uncertain, and that the evidence of our oldest authority (2 Chr. viii. 4) is in favour of *Tadmor*. The reading of LXX. is uncertain, *Θερμαθ* (codex A) or *Θερμα* (codex B)¹. (The Heb. letters D and R however are so much alike that the ρ of the Greek may be a mistake for a D which the translators found in the Hebrew.)

¹ 1 K. ii. 46 d (ed. Swete), but *Θερμαθ* in x. 23.

in the wilderness, in the land, and all the store cities that 19
Solomon had, and the cities for his chariots, and the cities
for his horsemen, and that which Solomon desired to build
for his pleasure in Jerusalem, and in Lebanon, and in all the
land of his dominion. As for all the people that were left of 20
the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and
the Jebusites, which were not of the children of Israel; their 21
children that were left after them in the land, whom the
children of Israel were not able utterly to destroy, of them
did Solomon raise a levy of bondservants, unto this day.
But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bond- 22

19. *store cities*] In these would be stored stores and provision of all kinds for man and beast, so that the *store cities* would include the cities for chariots and horsemen. The officer called 'steward' or 'treasurer' (Isa. xxii. 15) doubtless had the oversight of these. Cp. Exod. i. 11.

and in Lebanon] The house of the forest of Lebanon (vii. 2) was in Jerusalem, but it is not unlikely that Solomon had a residence for summer among the mountains.

20. *the Amorites*] 'Seven nations' of Canaan are mentioned, but of the five mentioned here only two were of importance. The *Amorites* gave their name to the land, so that Palestine and Phœnicia were known to the Assyrians as *the land of the A-mur-ru*, and the inhabitants both east and west of Jordan were known to Israel as Amorites (Josh. x. 5; xxiv. 12). The *Hittites* on the other hand were apparently few in Canaan, but they were an off-shoot from a powerful people whose home in the north-east of Syria was known to the Assyrians as *Hatti-land*. Their capitals were Kadesh on the Orontes and Carchemish on the Euphrates. Round these they fought for centuries on equal terms with the Egyptians and Assyrians, and their power may be said to have lasted down to the capture of Carchemish by Sargon king of Assyria in 717 B.C. Cp. x. 29; 2 K. vii. 6.

the Perizzites] Usually mentioned along with the Canaanites (Gen. xiii. 7; Jud. i. 4).

the Hivites] Josh. ix. 7 (inhabitants of Gibeon); xi. 3 (as dwelling under Mount Hermon).

the Jebusites] See Jud. i. 21; 2 Sam. v. 6 ff.

21. *their children that were left*] Cp. Jud. i. 19—36, an important passage which shews that the Israelite conquest of Canaan was far from complete at the time at which the passage was written.

raise a levy of bondservants] Cp. Josh. ix. 18—27; Jud. i. 28.

22. *But of the children of Israel*] The statement of this verse must be read in connexion with v. 13 ff.; xii. 4 ff., whence it appears that though Solomon did not reduce any Israelite to permanent slavery, yet he imposed upon his own people a corvée which was felt to be very burdensome. What a king could do short of making his people hewers of stone and wood is described in 1 Sam. viii. 11—17.

servants: but they were the men of war, and his servants, and his princes, and his captains, and rulers of his chariots and
 23 of his horsemen. These were the chief officers that were
 over Solomon's work, five hundred and fifty, which bare rule
 24 over the people that wrought in the work. But Pharaoh's
 daughter came up out of the city of David unto her house
 which *Solomon* had built for her: then did he build Millo.
 25 And three times in a year did Solomon offer burnt offerings
 and peace offerings upon the altar which he built unto the
 LORD, burning incense therewith, *upon the altar* that was
 before the LORD. So he finished the house.

26 And king Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber,
 which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the
 27 land of Edom. And Hiram sent in the navy his servants,

23. *five hundred and fifty*] In 2 Chr. viii. 10, *two hundred and fifty*. But see the note on v. 16.

24, 25 (cp. 2 Chr. viii. 11—13). TWO FRAGMENTARY NOTICES.

24. *unto her house*] Cp. iii. 1; vii. 8.

25. *And three times*] 2 Chr. viii. 13 adds, *even in the feast of unleavened bread* (i.e. the Passover), *and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles*. Cp. Exod. xxiii. 14—17; Deut. xvi. 16.

before the LORD] This expression which suggests a local Divine Presence is avoided in 2 Chr. viii. 13, *before the porch*.

So he finished the house] This clause appears (in the form, *So the house of the LORD was perfected*) in 2 Chr. viii. 16. Here in Kings it seems to be misplaced. It is probably an editorial note to the effect that the section of the book relating to the building and organisation of the Temple is finished.

26—28 (= 2 Chr. viii. 17, 18). SHIPS SENT TO OPHIR.

26. *Ezion-geber*] At the head of the gulf of Akaba, the eastern arm of the Red Sea. Jehoshaphat followed Solomon's example (xxii. 48), but without his success; the ships were wrecked.

Eloth] Called *Elath* 2 K. xiv. 22; xvi. 6; Deut. ii. 8. Elath, the Ailana of the Greeks and Romans, played a more important part in history than Ezion-geber; probably its harbour was better, and its importance grew as that of Ezion-geber diminished. Elath was 'built,' i.e. fortified and restored to Judah by Azariah (Uzziah), but lost to the Syrians by his grandson Ahaz.

the Red Sea] Heb. *Yam Suph*, 'sea of rushes' (or 'reeds'). It is applied to the gulf of Akaba (as here), and also to the gulf of Suez (Exod. xiii. 18. Cp. Exod. x. 19).

shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon. And they came to Ophir, and fetched from 28 thence gold, four hundred and twenty talents, and brought it to king Solomon.

And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of 10 Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions. And she came to Jerusalem 2

27. *that had knowledge of the sea*] The Israelites must have known something of the management of ships at least for short coasting voyages or for fishing (Gen. xlix. 13; Dent. xxxiii. 18, 19; Jud. v. 17), but they seem to have had no experience of distant expeditions by sea.

28. *Ophir*] The situation of Ophir is quite uncertain; see note on x. 11.

four hundred and twenty talents] LXX. (B) has a *hundred and twenty talents*, as in v. 14; perhaps the Greek translators understood both verses as referring to the same transaction.

CH. X. 1—13 (= 2 Chr. ix. 1—12). THE VISIT OF THE QUEEN OF SHEBA.

1. *Sheba*] A people called *Sheba* is mentioned twice in the Table of the Nations given in Gen. x., namely, in v. 7 as a descendant of Cush (Ethiopia) the son of Ham, and in v. 28 among various Arabian tribes descended from Shem. Thus *Sheba* was a people of mixed African and Asiatic descent, dwelling in South Arabia. In this district inscriptions and coins have been found testifying to the existence of a Sabean kingdom of a comparatively high degree of civilisation. From Ezek. xxvii. 22 it appears that Sheba exported spices, gold, and precious stones. How far to the north the Sabean kingdom extended is not known, but it is clear that its kings did not feel themselves safe from the Assyrians in the Eighth Century B.C. Tiglath-pileser III. (745—727 B.C.) on a broken tablet seems to mention the Sabeans among the Arabian tribes who brought him camels and other tribute, and Sargon (722—705 B.C.) received the tribute of 'Samsi queen of Aribi (Arabia)' and 'It'amara king of Sheba,' even 'gold, horses, and camels.'

of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD] The words *concerning the name of the LORD* are a duplicate and correction of the words which precede, added as a warning against secular pride. The text of 2 Chr. ix. 1 is without this addition.

to prove him] The same Heb. word as Gen. xxii. 1.

hard questions] 'Riddles.' The same Heb. word as in Jud. xiv. 12—18; Ezek. xvii. 2.

with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was
 3 in her heart. And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not any thing hid from the king which he told her
 4 not. And when the queen of Sheba had seen all the wisdom
 5 of Solomon, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the ¹attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and ²his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the
 6 LORD; there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of
 7 thine ³acts, and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the

¹ Heb. *standing*

² Or, *his burnt offering which he offered in &c.*

³ Or, *sayings*

2. *she communed.. in her heart*] i.e. she tested him as she had proposed to herself.

3. *hid from*] i.e. unknown to, or, not understood by.

5. *the meat of his table*] See iv. 22, 23.

the sitting of his servants] A ruler's state was measured by the number and importance of those who sat at his table. Cp. xviii. 19; Neh. v. 17, 18.

the attendance of his ministers] Literally, *the standing of his ministers*, i.e. their waiting at table. The words 'servant' and 'minister' are used differently in modern English. Here the *servant* (Heb. *ebad*) is one of the great officers of state, the *minister* (Heb. *mēshārēth*) is one who waits at table.

his cupbearers] The cupbearer held an important position in the household of an Eastern king, for his office was one of trust (Gen. xl. 2, 21; Neh. i. 11).

his ascent] Zion (viii. 1, note) was on a lower level than the Temple, and was possibly separated from it by a valley over which Solomon would seem to have built a causeway or a stairway. But the true rendering of the Hebrew is probably, *his burnt offerings which he offered in the house of the LORD* (LXX. τὴν ὀλοκαύτωσιν αὐτοῦ). The queen was impressed by the stately worship offered by Solomon in the Temple. In 2 Chr. ix. 4, 'ascent,' the Heb. word is different.

there was no more spirit in her] She 'was overcome.' Cp. Josh. v. 1.

6. *acts*] Marg., *sayings*. The word (Heb. *d'ḥārīm*) is used in both senses. Cp. xi. 41; xiv. 19; *al*; also the Heb. title of the book of Chronicles, 'The Acts (or 'events') of the Days.' A better rendering perhaps is, 'affairs, matters.'

words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: ¹thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. Happy are thy men, ⁸ happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, *and* that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the LORD thy ⁹ God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgement and justice. And she ¹⁰ gave the king an hundred and twenty talents of gold, and of spices very great store, and precious stones: there came no more such abundance of spices as these which the queen of Sheba gave to king Solomon. And the navy also of Hiram, ¹¹ that brought gold from Ophir, brought in from Ophir great plenty of ²almug trees and precious stones. And the king ¹²

¹ Heb. *thou hast added wisdom and goodness to the fame*

² In 2 Chr. ii. 8, ix. 10, *algum trees*. Perhaps, *sandal wood*.

7. *the fame*] Or, *report*; the same Heb. word as in Gen. xlv. 16; Isa. liii. 1.

8. *stand...before thee*] i.e. are in thy service and are admitted to thy council. Cp. xii. 6, 8; xvii. 1; xxii. 21; 2 K. v. 25; Deut. i. 38; x. 8. The phrase is used to describe service whether rendered to God or to man.

9. *loved Israel*] Cp. 2 Chr. ii. 11.

judgement and justice] Heb. *mishpat* and *ḥēdāḳāh*. Better, *justice and righteousness*. Justice (*mishpat*) means securing particular threatened rights to their owners. Cp. iii. 28. Righteousness (*ḥēdāḳāh*) means all doing of right.

10. *a hundred and twenty talents of gold*] A very large sum to be regarded rather as tribute than as a complimentary gift. Cp. iv. 21; 2 K. xvii. 4.

11, 12. GOLD AND ALMUG TREES.

These verses interrupt the story of the Queen of Sheba. No doubt the gold and incense from Sheba suggested the gold and almug trees from Ophir.

11. *from Ophir...almug trees*] In 2 Chr. ix. 10 *algum*. Perhaps, *sandal wood* (R.V. marg.). Another suggestion is *ebony*. This uncertainty as to the meaning of *almug* (*algum*) adds to the difficulty of identifying *Ophir*. If *sandal wood* be meant here, and *peacocks* be the right rendering in v. 22, *Ophir* might be some part of the coast of India. If *ebony* be meant here, and *peacocks* be a mistake in v. 22, *Ophir* may be identical with the *Punt* known to the Egyptians. *Punt* probably denotes the Ethiopian coast of the Red Sea with part of

made of the almug trees ¹pillars for the house of the LORD, and for the king's house, harps also and psalteries for the singers; there came no such almug trees, nor were seen,
 13 unto this day. And king Solomon gave to the queen of Sheba all her desire, whatsoever she asked, beside that
 2 which Solomon gave her of his royal bounty. So she turned, and went to her own land, she and her servants.
 14 Now the weight of gold that came to Solomon in one
 15 year was six hundred threescore and six talents of gold, beside that which the chapmen brought, and the traffic of the merchants, and of all the kings of the mingled people,

¹ Or, a railing Heb. a prop.

² Heb. which he gave her according to the hand of king Solomon

Somaliland together with part of the shore of Arabia. It may be again that Ophir denotes the south coast of Arabia, but that the ships which went to Ophir touched also at points on the African shore. In any case we are not expressly told that the merchandise mentioned in *vv.* 11, 22 came all from Ophir.

12. *pillars*] In 2 Chr. ix. 11 a different word meaning *terraces, raised paths*, is used.

psalteries] Heb. *nēbel*. This instrument is generally identified with that called *santir* among the Arabs. It is a long box with a flat bottom covered with a somewhat convex sounding-board over which the strings are stretched (Nowack, *Heb. Archäologie*, i. 275). The harp (Heb. *kinnor*) was a simpler instrument; a *lyre* rather than a true harp. See Driver's illustrated note to *Amos*, p. 234.

13. *beside &c.*] Heb. *beside that which he gave her according to the hand of king Solomon*. A vague phrase in accordance with Eastern usage.

14—22 (= 2 Chr. ix. 13—21). SOLOMON'S GOLD.

14. *six hundred threescore and six talents*] 666 is 'a round number'; it implies *completeness*. A 'talent' contained 3600 (or sometimes 3000) shekels, i.e. about 112 lbs. avoirdupois, or less. See note on *v.* 16.

15. *the chapmen*] i.e. merchants. Cp. the verb 'to chaffer,' and the German 'Kaufmann.' The Heb. word means 'those who go about' as merchants.

of the mingled people] Read with LXX. (transposing the consonants of the Heb.), *of the land beyond* [the River], i.e. 'of the land west of the Euphrates' (cp. *iv.* 24), the words being those of a writer of the Captivity living in some place east of the Euphrates. The reference is chiefly to 'the kings of Syria'; see *v.* 29. In 2 Chr. ix. 14, 'of Arabia.'

and of the governors of the country. And king Solomon made two hundred targets of beaten gold: six hundred *shekels* of gold went to one target. And he made three hundred shields of beaten gold; three pound of gold went to one shield: and the king put them in the house of the forest of Lebanon. Moreover the king made a great throne of ivory, and overlaid it with the finest gold. There were

¹ Heb. *maneh*

the governors] LXX., *the satraps*, a happy translation, for the Heb. *pehoth* (or *pahdwoth*) is a word applied specially to the governors of the provinces of the Assyrian, Babylonian, and Persian empires. Cp. 2 K. xviii. 24 ('one captain'); Neh. ii. 7, 9 ('governors'). In Ezra viii. 36; Esth. iii. 12 the words *dhashdarpēnim* (satraps) and *pahdwoth* are used side by side, the latter as a word better known in Hebrew to explain the former. Cp. also xx. 24 where the name is given to governors under the king of Syria.

16. *targets*] Heb. *šinnah*, a large shield, carried sometimes by a shield-bearer. Cp. 1 Sam. xvii. 7.

beaten gold] See vi. 20, note.

six hundred shekels] The system of weight used in Palestine was not peculiar to the Hebrews. Starting perhaps from Babylon it spread itself (with some variations) over the whole of Western Asia. The shekel according to early Babylonian usage weighed about 252 grains, so that 600 were equivalent to between 21 and 22 lbs. avoirdupois. Shekels, however, of both higher and lower estimation are known to have existed, and it is useless to conjecture what particular reckoning is followed by the writer of this verse. See Hastings' *Dictionary*, vol. IV., WEIGHTS AND MEASURES, by A. R. S. Kennedy.

17. *shields*] Heb. *māḡēn*, a shield of the ordinary size and usually perhaps round in shape.

pound] Heb. *maneh*, a designation frequent among the Babylonians, but not common in the Old Testament. Sixty shekels went to a *maneh*, and sixty *maneh* to a talent. In Exod. xxxviii. 25, 26 (a post-exilic passage) the talent is reckoned at 3000 shekels, which probably allows only fifty shekels to a *maneh*, but this is exceptional. The 'shields' were a fourth (or a little more) of the 'targets' (v. 16) in weight.

in the house of the forest of Lebanon] The shields may have been used in state processions. Cp. xiv. 27, 28.

18. *the finest*] Heb. *mūphās*. The word is found here only and the meaning is uncertain. Some scholars would read *mēūphās*, 'from Uphaz' (Jer. x. 9), while others take this *mēūphās* as a mistake for *mēōphār*, 'from Ophir.' But see vi. 20, note on *pure gold*.

six steps to the throne, and the top of the throne was round behind: and there were ¹stays on either side by the place of
 20 the seat, and two lions standing beside the stays. And twelve lions stood there on the one side and on the other upon the six steps: there was not the like made in any
 21 kingdom. And all king Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the vessels of the house of the forest of Lebanon were of pure gold: none were of silver; it was
 22 nothing accounted of in the days of Solomon. For the king had at sea a navy of Tarshish with the navy of Hiram: once every three years came the navy of Tarshish, bringing
 23 gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks. **P** So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and
 24 in wisdom. And all the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his
 25 heart. And they brought every man his present, vessels of

¹ Or, *arms* Heb. *hands*

19. *and the top...behind*] Better, and the throne had a round top, i.e. a canopy.

21. *pure*] Heb. *sāgūr*, as in vi. 20. See note there.

22. *a navy of Tarshish*] i.e. large ships fit for long voyages. Cp. Ps. xlvi. 7. The phrase may have come from the Tyrians, who had a trading station at Tarshish (Tartessus in Spain). Whither these ships went is not said, but probably (v. 11) they went (among other places) to Ophir. The gold might come from Arabia or Somaliland, the ivory and apes from the African or Indian coast, the peacocks (if peacocks are meant) from India.

apes] Heb. *kōphim*, with which the Greek, *kēboi* (κῆβοι), or *kēpoi* (κῆποι), 'monkeys,' is connected. Apes were much sought after; they figure on many ancient monuments among the things offered as tribute to Assyrian kings, e.g. on the Black Obelisk erected by Shalmaneser II., the contemporary of Jehu. Similarly it is recorded that baboons and monkeys were brought from Punt by the expedition despatched by the Egyptian queen Hatshepsut in the Fifteenth Century B.C. (Breasted, *History of Egypt*, p. 276).

peacocks] So LXX.; Heb. *tukkiyyim*. The word occurs only here and in 2 Chr. ix. 21, and the meaning is not certain.

23—29 (= 2 Chr. ix. 21—28). SOLOMON'S GREATNESS.

23. *exceeded*] Cp. iii. 12, 13; iv. 30.

25. *his present*] Cp. v. 10, note.

silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, and armour, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year. And 26 Solomon gathered together chariots and horsemen: and he had a thousand and four hundred chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen, which he bestowed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem. And the king made silver 27 to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycomore trees that are in the lowland, for abundance. And the horses which Solomon had were brought out of 28 Egypt; and the king's merchants received them in droves,

26. *a thousand and four hundred*] See iv. 26, note.

the chariot cities] Cp. ix. 19. They were probably situated chiefly in the lowland, in the great plain of Jezreel, and in the table land east of Jordan. Western Palestine as a whole is not sufficiently level for the evolutions of chariots. Cp. i. 33, note; G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*, pp. 329—331 and Appendix v.

27. *sycomore*] The fig-mulberry, a tree having leaves like mulberry-leaves, and bearing a fruit resembling figs. Cp. 1 Chr. xxvii. 28.

the lowland] Heb. *Shēphēlāh*. The stretch of low hills separating the Maritime Plain (the Philistine country) from the Mountain (the hill country of Judah). See G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*, ch. x.

28. *the horses*] Cp. Deut. xvi. 17.

out of Egypt] Egypt proper is an agricultural not a pastoral country; it lacks the broad plains suitable for the rearing of large numbers of horses. But the Arabs of the Sinai peninsula stood in close political and mercantile relations with Egypt, and it may be that though the horses passed through Egyptian hands, they were raised in Arabia and Central Asia. Breasted writing of the revival of Egypt after the expulsion of the Hyksos (circ. 1580 B.C.) says:—'The deft craftsmen of Egypt soon mastered the art of chariot-making, while the stables of the Pharaoh contained thousands of the best horses to be had in Asia' (*History of Egypt*, p. 235).

received (bought) them in droves] This translation, though not literal, is substantially correct. LXX. for *in droves* and *each drove* gives *ἐκ Θεκοῦ*; hence some scholars (taking *Θεκοῦ* to be a mistake for *Kuē*) would render, *received them from Kuē* (a name of Cilicia known to us from the Assyrian inscriptions). But since (a) Cilicia was not a horse-breeding country, and (b) the meaning 'drove' for the Heb. *miqweh* though not certain is highly probable, the rendering *from Kuē* is not likely to be correct. Dr Winckler (*K.A.T.*, ed. 3, p. 238) supposes further that for 'Egypt' (*Miṣraim*) we should read *Mucri*, which he on rather slight grounds takes to be a name for part of Cappadocia, which was a horse-breeding country. But two identifications as doubtful as *Kuē* and *Mucri* contribute little to one another's support. It is more probable that R.V. is right as to the general sense of this verse.

29 each drove at a price. And a chariot came up and went out of Egypt for six hundred *shekels* of silver, and an horse for an hundred and fifty: and so for all the kings of the Hittites, and for the kings of Syria, did they bring them out¹ by their means.

11 Now king Solomon loved many strange women,² together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites,

¹ Heb. *in their hand*

² Or, *besides*

29. *the Hittites*] See ix. 20, note.

the kings of Syria] Syria (Heb. *Aram*) was divided into several states, such as Damascus, Zobah, Hamath, and Beth-rehob. Cp. 2 Sam. viii. 3—10; x. 6—19.

did they bring them out] The phrase by itself is ambiguous. It might mean that Solomon's merchants provided the Hittites and Syrians, or that the Hittites and the Syrians were provided with horses from the same source and on the same terms as Solomon.

by their means] The words as they stand can mean only that Solomon's merchants were agents for the Hittites and for the Syrians. LXX. however connects the words closely with *Syria* and renders from a slightly different Heb. text, *Συρία κατὰ θάλασσαν*, 'Western Syria'; so that the whole clause reads: 'And thus they came out for all the kings of the Hittites and for the kings of Western Syria.' If however the marg., *in their hand*, be correct, the meaning is simply that the merchants brought the horses with them. Cp. 2 K. viii. 9, 'Hazeal...took a present in his hand (so marg.), even... forty camels' burden.'

CH. XI. 1—8 (no parallel in Chron.). SOLOMON'S UNFAITHFULNESS.

The LXX. text of this passage contains fewer repetitions than the Heb. text, and follows a more logical order. Beginning with the statement that Solomon was a lover of women (*v. 1 a*), it immediately adds the number of his wives and concubines (*v. 3 a*). It then proceeds to say that these women were foreigners (*v. 1 b*), and forbidden to Israel (*v. 2*). In old age Solomon's heart was not perfect (*v. 4 b*); his wives turned it aside after other gods (*v. 4 a*). It was then that Solomon built a high place for Chemosh, Molech (*v. 7*) and Ashtoreth. Cp. *v. 5*. So he did for all his wives (*v. 8*). Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD (*v. 6*). There is certainly much to be said for this juxtaposition in the Greek of *v. 1* and *v. 3*, and also of *v. 4* and *v. 7*. Further, LXX. omits *3 b* (unnecessary; cp. *v. 4*), *v. 5* (also unnecessary; cp. *v. 7*), and the statement in *v. 7* regarding the position of the high place. It may be that the roughness of the Heb. text is due to the fact that two separate accounts have been blended, but not completely harmonised. In this

Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; of the 2 nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go among them, neither shall they come among you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he 3 had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. For it 4 came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess 5 of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the

case LXX. contains a revision of the earlier rougher text incorporated in the Hebrew.

It is to be noted that Solomon is not charged with having forsaken the God of Israel, nor with having sacrificed to strange gods. His sin consisted in his patronage of foreign worship, but the extent of it is not indicated. Verse 5, which LXX. omits, says that he 'went after' certain strange gods, but it is not clear that the words mean more than that he built high places for his wives' gods. His wives (not he himself) burnt incense and sacrificed to these deities. But Solomon was certainly an offender when judged by the law of Deuteronomy, for by it any toleration of foreign worship was forbidden (Deut. xii. 2, 3; *al*). The effect in any case was evil, for under his successor Rehoboam idolatrous practices flourished in Judah (xiv. 21-24).

1. *Ammonites*] Solomon's successor Rehoboam was the son of one of these. See xiv. 21. It was usual for a suzerain to fill his harem with the daughters of the rulers of dependent states.

Zidonians] It is not said, as we might expect, that one of Hiram's daughters was a wife to Solomon, but it is perhaps to be inferred.

2. *the LORD said*] Cp. Deut. vii. 1-4.

3. *seven hundred wives*] Cp. Deut. xvii. 17.

4. *not perfect*] Cp. viii. 61.

David] Cp. ix. 4. Of David's wives only one is described as a foreigner (2 Sam. iii. 2-5).

5. *Ashtoreth*] LXX. *Astarte*. She was the consort of Baal, the chief god of Tyre, and was herself the goddess of love, and perhaps also the moon-goddess. Both she and her husband were worshipped under different titles in different parts of Syria; hence we find the plural *Baalim* and *Ashtaroth*, i.e. the 'Baals' and the 'Ashtoreths' in Jud. x. 6. See note on *the Baalim* (xviii. 18).

the goddess] Heb. *god*; LXX. *βδέλυγμα*, 'abomination' or 'abominable image.' The expression is used in order to avoid giving the title 'god' to Ashtoreth.

Milcom] Called *Malcām* in Jer. xlix. 1, 3 (R.V.); but usually

6 Ammonites. And Solomon did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did 7 David his father. Then did Solomon build an high place

Mōlech. Cp. v. 7. At first sight it seems to be a proper name, but this is by no means certain. More probable is the view that the vowels given to the Hebrew MLK to form *Mōlech* are due to the tendency among the later Jews to distort or conceal the names of heathen gods. The vowels seem to suggest that the word *bōsheth*, 'shame,' should be substituted for the name (or title) of the god. (In this connexion it should be noted that the *Eshbaal* of 1 Chr. viii. 33 appears as *Ishbōsheth* in 2 Sam. li. 8, and the *Merib-baal* of 1 Chr. viii. 34 as *Mephibōsheth* in 2 Sam. ix. 6, 12. In these cases *baal*, 'lord,' has been altered, because of its heathenish sound, into *bōsheth*, 'shame.'). Probably we should take *Mōlech* as a distorted form of *Melech*, 'king,' and *Milcōm* (*Malcām*) as an Ammonite form of the same word. The god meant here was known generally as the *melech* or 'king,' just as other gods were known as *baal* or *ādōn*, 'lord.' The questions then arise, What kind of a god was known as the 'king,' and why were human sacrifices offered to him? It appears that this title was in use among the Phœnicians, and especially at Byblus; and Philo of Byblus writes of the god of his city, whom he calls *Cronus*, that he sacrificed his own son. Of this deity Diodorus (xx. 14) says, 'The Carthaginians had a brāsen statue of Cronus with hands extended upwards, but with the palms bent downwards towards the earth, so that the child who was laid upon them rolled into a pit of fire below.' Now since Cronus was a god of the Underworld where 'no rays of the sun penetrated and no wind blew' (Homer, *Iliad*, viiii. 479 ff.), i.e. was a god of the Dead, it is quite probable that the deity whom the Semites called *Melech* was also a god of the Shades. Such a god would naturally be supposed to have the desire of peopling his realm, and human sacrifices would seem to be acceptable to him. Thus *Melech* seems to be the designation of a deity like the Babylonian *Nergal* (2 K. xvii. 30), the god of pestilence, war, and the country of the Dead. Porphyry (*De Abst.* ii. 56) writes that the Phœnicians in great calamities such as war, drought, or pestilence sacrificed one of those dearest to them to Cronus. Cp. Lagrange, *Études*, pp. 72—109 (2^{ème} édit.).

[*abomination*] Heb. *shikkuf*, which corresponds with the Greek word *βδέλυγμα*. Or *shikkuf* may mean rather 'terror' or 'object of fear,' an epithet applied to a god by his own worshippers. Cp. Gen. xxxi. 53, 'Jacob sware by the Fear (i.e. the God) of his father Isaac.'

6. *went not fully after*] Cp. Deut. i. 36, 'he (Caleb) hath wholly followed the LORD.'

7. *an high place*] Not a building, but a levelled space on the top of a hill with an altar and symbols of the god who was worshipped there. Such a platform cut out of the rock has been discovered at Petra, at a height of several hundred feet above the valley. It is 47 feet

for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, in the mount that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the children of Ammon. And so did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods.

And the LORD was angry with Solomon, because his heart was turned away from the LORD, the God of Israel, which had appeared unto him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods: but he kept not that which the LORD commanded. Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this ¹¹ is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it, for David thy ¹²

¹ Heb. *is with thee*

long by 24 feet broad, and has on the west an altar, also cut out of the solid rock, approached by steps. See *P. E. F. Quarterly Statement* for 1900, page 350. At Gezer (ix. 15, note) a high place has been found marked by an alignment of rude pillar-stones, perhaps *maqṣēbōth* (xiv. 23, note). See *P. E. F. Quarterly Statement* for 1903, pages 23 ff.; also *Quarterly Statement* for 1904, page 111.

Chemosh] The special name of the god of Moab. Cp. Num. xxi. 29, 'O people of Chemosh' (in an address to Moab). Human sacrifices were sometimes offered to him (2 K. lii. 27), and he was identified with the god of the Ammonites, commonly called *Molech* or *Melech*. Thus from the Moabite stone we learn that the father of king Mesha was named Chemosh-Melech, i.e. 'Chemosh is Molech'; and in Jud. xi. 24 the god of Ammon is actually called 'Chemosh.' This is less surprising since Moab and Ammon were kindred peoples, both claiming descent from Lot. It is possible that the high place here spoken of was dedicated to Chemosh-Molech, for the wording of the verse is 'an high place for Chemosh...and for Molech.'

Molech] See note on *Milcom*, v. 5.

9—13 (no parallel in Chron.). THE PUNISHMENT ANNOUNCED.

9. *twice*] See iii. 5; ix. 2.

11. *is done of thee*] Heb. *is with thee*. Cp. 2 Chr. xxviii. 10, 'Are there not even with you trespasses?'

rend...from thee] Rather, *rend from off thee*. The kingdom is spoken of as though it were a garment. Cp. Jer. xliii. 12, Nebuchadrezzar 'shall array himself with the land of Egypt, as a shepherd putteth on his garment.'

12. *in thy days I will not do it*] For this postponement of punishment cp. xxi. 29; 2 K. xx. 17—19.

- father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son.
 13 Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but I will give one tribe to thy son, for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen.
 14 And the LORD raised up an adversary unto Solomon, Hadad the Edomite: he was of the king's seed in Edom.
 15 For it came to pass, when David ¹was in Edom, and Joab the captain of the host was gone up to bury the slain, and
 16 had smitten every male in Edom; (for Joab and all Israel remained there six months, until he had cut off every male
 17 in Edom;) that Hadad fled, he and certain Edomites of his father's servants with him, to go into Egypt; Hadad being
 18 yet a little child. And they arose out of Midian, and came

¹ The Sept. and Syr. read, *destroyed Edom*

13. *I will give one tribe*] i.e. the tribe of Judah (*vv.* 32, 36; *xii.* 20). The twelfth tribe, Benjamin, being the frontier tribe, was probably divided between the two kingdoms; it is sometimes reckoned to Judah (*xii.* 21, note).

14—40 (no parallel in Chron.). SOLOMON'S ADVERSARIES.

Such general statements as that Solomon's dominion reached from the Euphrates in the north-east to Gaza in the south-west, and that Solomon had peace on every side (*iv.* 24, 25), have to be seriously qualified in the light of the information given in this passage. In the south Hadad reigned over Edom from the time that he heard of the death of David followed by that of Joab (*v.* 21), and 'did mischief' to Israel (*v.* 25). In the north-east Rezon maintained himself at Damascus as an adversary to Israel 'all the days of Solomon' (*v.* 25). In Judah itself, while Solomon was still strengthening the fortifications of Jerusalem, Jeroboam 'lifted up his hand against the king' (*vv.* 27—29).

14—22 (no parallel in Chron.). HADAD THE EDMITE.

14. *adversary*] Heb. *satan*, so LXX. Not a proper name. The use of the word here throws light on the ideas regarding the Evil Spirit found in the O.T. A *satan* is a messenger of evil sent by God to punish the sinner, or to try the good (*Job* i. 6 ff.). He may be either human (as here) or a spirit (as in *Job*). Satan as the prince of a kingdom of spiritual evil is unknown to the O.T.

15. *when David was in Edom*] Rather, *when David was occupied with Edom*. The rendering of LXX., *when David was destroying Edom*, comes from an inferior reading of the Hebrew.

Joab] Cp. 2 Sam. viii. 13 (margin), 14; Ps. lx. (heading).

18. *they arose out of Midian*] This account of the flight is abridged, but the outlines can be restored. Hadad and his companions at first

to Paran: and they took men with them out of Paran, and they came to Egypt, unto Pharaoh king of Egypt; which gave him an house, and appointed him victuals, and gave him land. And Hadad found great favour in the sight of 19 Pharaoh, so that he gave him to wife the sister of his own wife, the sister of Tahpenes the queen. And the sister 20 of Tahpenes bare him Genubath his son, whom Tahpenes weaned in Pharaoh's house: and Genubath was in Pharaoh's house among the sons of Pharaoh. And when Hadad heard 21 in Egypt that David slept with his fathers, and that Joab the captain of the host was dead, Hadad said to Pharaoh, Let me depart, that I may go to mine own country. Then 22 Pharaoh said unto him, But what hast thou lacked with me, that, behold, thou seekest to go to thine own country? And he answered, Nothing: howbeit let me depart in any wise.

And God raised up *another* adversary unto him, Rezon 23 the son of Eliada, which had fled from his lord Hadadezer

fled eastward (the direct road to Egypt being cut off) to the part of the Syrian steppes which was called the land of Midian. After staying there for a time, until Joab's vigilance was relaxed, they journeyed towards the south-west to Paran, the district about the head of the gulf of Akaba. There they found other Edomite fugitives, and the band thus strengthened came to Egypt and was received by Pharaoh. The LXX. text of vv. 17, 18 is corrupt in itself, and generally inferior to the Hebrew.

Pharaoh] Perhaps a different king from Solomon's father-in-law; iii. 1; ix. 16. It was of course good policy to support (within certain limits) a prince who might be useful as an adversary to Solomon. The reception of the Old and the Young Pretender at the court of France in the first half of the eighteenth century is a parallel case.

20. *whom Tahpenes weaned*] i.e. 'brought up and educated.' LXX. ἐξέθρεψεν.

22. *let me depart in any wise*] The end of the story is sufficiently indicated by this verse taken in connexion with v. 14. LXX. however adds first the words, *and Hader* (Hadad) *returned to his land*, and next v. 25 b in the form, 'This is the mischief which Hadad did, and he abhorred Israel, and reigned in Edom.' It is on the whole more probable that v. 25 b refers to Hadad and Edom, not to Rezon and Syria.

23—25 (no parallel in Chron.). REZON OF DAMASCUS.

23. *Rezon*] *Rezin* or *Rezon*, in Assyrian *Razunnu*, is also the name of a much later king of Damascus (2 K. xvi. 5, 6, 9; Isa. vii. 1, 4, 8).

Hadadezer] See 2 Sam. viii. 3, 9, 10; x. 19.

24 king of Zobah: and he gathered men unto him, and became captain over a troop, when David slew them *of Zobah*: and they went to Damascus, and dwelt therein, and reigned in
25 Damascus. And he was an adversary to Israel all the days of Solomon, beside the mischief that Hadad *did*: and he abhorred Israel, and reigned over Syria.

26 And Jeroboam the son of Nebat, an Ephraimite of Zeredah, a servant of Solomon, whose mother's name was Zeruah, a widow woman, he also lifted up his hand against
27 the king. And this was the cause that he lifted up his hand against the king: Solomon built Millo, and ¹repaired the
28 breach of the city of David his father. And the man Jeroboam was a mighty man of valour: and Solomon saw the young man that he was industrious, and he gave him
29 charge over all the ²labour of the house of Joseph. And it

¹ Heb. *closed up*

² Heb. *burden*

24. *captain over a troop*] He was a marauder just like David himself, before he became king (1 Sam. xxii. 1, 2).

them of Zobah] The text is faulty, and LXX. gives no help, but the general sense is no doubt rightly given in the E.V.

and [they] reigned] The plural is unsuitable; but a change in the vowel points gives, **and they made him king**. This rendering is probably right.

25. *And...Solomon*] In LXX. (A) the account of Rezon ends with these words, the rest of the verse (with *Edom* for *Syria*) being attached to the end of v. 22 to complete the account of Hadad. See note on v. 22, above. *Vv. 23—25 a* are not found in LXX. (B).

26—40 (no parallel in Chron.). JEROBOAM THE SON OF NEBAT.

26. *Zeredah*] No place of this name is known. Perhaps *Zarethan* (near the Jordan) is meant. Cp. vii. 46, note.

27. *Millo*] See note on ix. 15.

28. *of valour*] This expression denotes efficiency in general; it is not limited to prowess in war. Boaz was a mighty man *of valour* (*of wealth*, Ruth ii. 1, E.V.), and the Wife described in Prov. xxxi. 10 was a woman *of valour* (*a virtuous woman*, E.V.), who did *valiantly* (*virtuously*, E.V., Prov. xxxi. 29).

the labour] Heb. *burden*, i.e. the work of carrying building materials and rubbish. Cp. v. 13—15; ix. 15. The Heb. word (like our word *labour*) is sometimes applied to the labourers, and so is translated *levy* in iv. 6; ix. 15.

of the house of Joseph] i.e. of the tribe of Ephraim. He was apparently a sub-overseer under Adoniram (Adoram). Cp. iv. 6; xii. 18.

came to pass at that time, when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, that the prophet Ahijah the Shilonite found him in the way; now *Ahijah* had clad himself with a new garment; and they two were alone in the field. And ³⁰ Ahijah laid hold of the new garment that was on him, and rent it in twelve pieces. And he said to Jeroboam, 'Take ³¹ thee ten pieces: for thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I will rend the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten tribes to thee: (but he shall have one tribe, ³² for my servant David's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake, the city which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel:) because that they have forsaken me, and have worshipped ³³ Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, Chemosh the god of Moab, and Milcom the god of the children of Ammon; and they have not walked in my ways, to do that which is right in mine eyes, and *to keep* my statutes and my judgments, as did David his father. Howbeit I will not take ³⁴ the whole kingdom out of his hand: but I will make him prince all the days of his life, for David my servant's sake, whom I chose, ¹ because he kept my commandments and my

¹ Or, *who kept*

29. *Ahijah the Shilonite*] Cp. xii. 15; xiv. 2; xv. 29. *Shilonite* means inhabitant of *Shiloh* (1 Sam. i. 3; iv. 3; Ps. lxxviii. 60). At a later time he announced the destruction of the house of Jeroboam. *Shiloh* was once the religious capital of Israel (Jer. vii. 12).

now Ahijah had clad himself] So LXX., but A.V. (agreeing with the Hebrew) has *he had clad himself*, and the pronoun may refer equally well to Jeroboam. Probably there were *two* symbolic actions; *first*, the prophet takes the garment away to symbolize the removal of the kingdom, and *secondly*, he divides it into portions in order to shew to Jeroboam what his share would be. Extravagant as the action seems to us, we must remember *first*, that signs are more than words to Easterns, and *secondly*, that the licence allowed to prophets was almost unbounded.

in the field] i.e. in the open country, away from any town. Cp. Gen. iv. 8.

32. *he shall have one tribe*] Cp. v. 13.

33. *they have forsaken...they have not walked*] LXX. has the verbs in the sing. number, the subject being *Solomon*. This agrees better with the concluding phrase, *as did David his father*.

Ashtoreth...Chemosh...Milcom] See notes on vv. 5, 7.

34. *prince*] Heb. *nāsī*, the word *king* being avoided (as is commonly the case) in prophetic utterances. Cp. i. 35, note.

35 statutes : but I will take the kingdom out of his son's hand,
 36 and will give it unto thee, even ten tribes. And unto his son
 will I give one tribe; that David my servant may have a lamp
 alway before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen
 37 me to put my name there. And I will take thee, and thou
 shalt reign ¹according to all that thy soul desireth, and shalt
 38 be king over Israel. And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken
 unto all that I command thee, and wilt walk in my ways, and
 do that which is right in mine eyes, to keep my statutes and
 my commandments, as David my servant did; that I will be
 with thee, and will build thee a sure house, as I built for
 39 David, and will give Israel unto thee. And I will for this
 40 afflict the seed of David, but not for ever. Solomon sought
 therefore to kill Jeroboam : but Jeroboam arose, and fled
 into Egypt, unto Shishak king of Egypt, and was in Egypt
 until the death of Solomon.

¹ Or, *over all*

36. *a lamp*] Cp. xv. 4; 2 K. viii. 19; also 2 Esd. x. 1, 2 (cp. v. 22),
 'When my son was entered into his wedding chamber, he fell down,
 and died. Then we all overthrew the lights,' etc. The light is a sign
 of prosperity and joy.

38. *if thou wilt hearken*] Cp. lx. 4, 5.

a sure house] Cp. 1 Sam. xxv. 28.

39. *And I will...afflict*] Ps. lxxxix. 30—35. This verse seems out
 of place in its present context. It is omitted in LXX.

40. *Solomon sought therefore*] At this point we expect particulars
 shewing *how* Jeroboam 'lifted up his hand against the king' (v. 27),
 but the editor has, it seems, abbreviated the document which lay
 before him.

Shishak]. This name is of great importance, for it supplies the first
 definite link between the history of Israel and that of Egypt, between a
 book of the Bible and the ancient inscriptions of a great empire.
 In iii. 1; xi. 18, 19, and also in Genesis and Exodus the king of
 Egypt appears merely as 'Pharaoh' (cp. iii. 1, note), and the identifica-
 tion of the particular Pharaoh meant in each case is a work of difficulty
 and uncertainty. But *Shishak* (LXX. *Zovaxela*) *king of Egypt* cannot
 be mistaken. He is the *Sheshonk* or *Sheshonq* (circ. 952—930 B.C.), the
 founder of the twenty-second dynasty, who set up a long inscription in
 the temple of Karnak recording a campaign in Canaan, and giving a
 list of the cities (Israelite as well as Judean) which he captured.
 Cp. introductory note to xiv. 21—31.

Now the rest of the 'acts of Solomon, and all that he 41
did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the book of the
acts of Solomon? And the time that Solomon reigned in 42
Jerusalem over all Israel was forty years. And Solomon 43
slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David
his father: and Rehoboam his son reigned in his stead.

And Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel were 12

¹ Or, words Or, matters

41—43 (= 2 Chr. ix. 29—31). THE EPILOGUE TO SOLOMON'S
REIGN.

41. *his wisdom*] The reference is probably to such accounts as
are given in iii. 16—28; iv. 30—34; x. 1—9. *The wisdom which
was written in the book of the acts of Solomon* cannot be identified
directly with any one of the Sapiential Books of the Old Testament,
e.g. with Proverbs or Ecclesiastes, though part of the contents of
the book of Proverbs may have been derived from the Acts of
Solomon. The Book of Proverbs as we have it shews distinct signs
of composite authorship. Cp. Prov. xxiv. 23; xxv. 1; xxx. 1; xxxi. 1.

the book of the acts of Solomon] In Chron. the appeal is to *the history
(or words) of Nathan the prophet, and the prophecy of Ahijah the
Shilonite, and the visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam the
son of Nebat*. Cp. 1 Chr. xxix. 29, where Samuel the seer, Nathan the
prophet, and Gad the seer are appealed to for the account of David's
reign. The *Acts of Solomon* may have been begun by Nathan and
continued by later prophets, as the words of 2 Chr. ix. 29 suggest.

42. *forty years*] This was also the length of David's reign.
See ii. 11. In the case of Solomon *forty* may be a round number.

43. *slept with his fathers*] See l. 21, note.

buried in the city of David] Cp. ii. 10; xiv. 31; *al.*

Rehoboam] Cp. 1 Chr. iii. 10. In spite of what is said of Solomon's
wives in *vv.* 1, 3 nothing is anywhere said of other sons of Solomon
beside Rehoboam.

CHR. XII. 1—15 (= 2 Chr. x. 1—15). THE MEETING AT
SHECHEM.

1. *to Shechem*] There was no settled rule of succession to the
kingdom in Israel, certainly no man whether of the house of David
or not could expect as a matter of course to inherit Solomon's
throne. The consent of the people must be won, or at least their
acquiescence secured. Saul was accepted by the people after he had
been nominated by the prophet (1 Sam. xi. 14, 15); David was
formally made king by the northern tribes (2 Sam. v. 1—3); Solomon
secured their acquiescence by the promptness and vigour with which
his supporters acted while his father was yet alive (i. 1—ii. 12).
Rehoboam accordingly went to Shechem in order to be accepted as

2 come to Shechem to make him king. And it came to pass,
 when Jeroboam the son of Nebat heard of it, (for he was yet
 in Egypt, whither he had fled from the presence of king
 3 Solomon, and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt, and they sent and
 called him;) that Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel
 4 came, and spake unto Rehoboam, saying, Thy father made
 our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous
 service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon
 5 us, lighter, and we will serve thee. And he said unto them,
 Depart yet for three days, then come again to me. And the
 6 people departed. And king Rehoboam took counsel with
 the old men, that had stood before Solomon his father while
 he yet lived, saying, What counsel give ye me to return
 7 answer to this people? And they spake unto him, saying,
 If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt
 serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to
 8 them, then they will be thy servants for ever. But he
 forsook the counsel of the old men which they had given
 him, and took counsel with the young men that were grown
 9 up with him, that stood before him. And he said unto
 them, What counsel give ye, that we may return answer to
 this people, who have spoken to me, saying, Make the yoke
 10 that thy father did put upon us lighter? And the young
 men that were grown up with him spake unto him, saying,
 Thus shalt thou say unto this people that spake unto thee,

king by the northern tribes. Shechem was well situated for a meeting of the representatives of all the people. It was in the middle of the land between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, close to the modern Nablus. Cp. Deut. xxvii. 11—14; Josh. xxiv. 1 ff.

2. *it came to pass, when Jeroboam...heard of it...and Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt*] The last clause should read, *that Jeroboam returned out of Egypt*; so Chron. The difference between the two readings in Hebrew is very slight. The bracket should end after *Solomon*. LXX. has here a much shorter text, and Jeroboam is not mentioned in the Greek until v. 20. This shorter text agrees better with the contents of v. 20.

3. *called him;) that Jeroboam*] Rather, *called him; and Jeroboam*.

4. *made our yoke grievous*] See v. 13, 14, note; ix. 22, note; xi. 28. Cp. 1 Sam. viii. 11—18.

6. *stood before*] Cp. x. 8, note.

7. *If thou wilt be a servant*] The phrase is softened in Chron. to *If thou be kind*. The meaning is, *If thou wilt obey them by granting what they require*.

saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us; thus shalt thou speak unto them, My little finger is thicker than my father's loins. And now whereas 11 my father did lade you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. So Jeroboam and all the people came 12 to Rehoboam the third day, as the king bade, saying, Come to me again the third day. And the king answered the 13 people roughly, and forsook the counsel of the old men which they had given him; and spake to them after the 14 counsel of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke: my father chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. So 15 the king hearkened not unto the people; for it was a thing brought about of the LORD, that he might establish his word, which the LORD spake by the hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam the son of Nebat. And when all Israel saw 16 that the king hearkened not unto them, the people answered the king, saying, What portion have we in David? neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: to your tents, O Israel: now see to thine own house, David. So Israel departed unto their tents. But as for the children of Israel 17

10. *My little finger &c.*] No doubt a proverbial expression.

11. *with whips*] A whip or flail was among the insignia of an Egyptian king. See Erman, *Ancient Egypt*, E. Tr., p. 60. It may be that the same was the case with Israelite kings.

with scorpions] Another proverbial expression. Cp. v. 10.

13. *roughly*] Rehoboam imagined that he could coerce the northern tribes with threats. No doubt the success of Solomon in imposing taskwork misled him as to the temper and strength of Israel, for when the revolt broke out, he sent the chief taskmaster Adoram (v. 18) to suppress it.

15. *it was a thing brought about of the LORD*] Cp. v. 24; xi. 11-13. *Ahijah the Shilonite*] See xi. 29-39.

16-20 (= 2 Chr. x. 16-19). THE REVOLT.

16. *What portion have we in David?...to your tents, O Israel*] Contrast the language of the ten tribes in David's own lifetime (2 Sam. v. 1, 2; xix. 43). The same watchword heralded the revolt of Sheba son of Bichri (2 Sam. xx. 1). For the expression *tents* see viii. 66, note.

17. *the children of Israel which dwell in the cities of Judah*] These would be chiefly men in the service of the royal house or men who had

which dwelt in the cities of Judah, Rehoboam reigned over
18 them. Then king Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was over
the levy; and all Israel stoned him with stones, that he died.

And king Rehoboam made speed to get him up to his
19 chariot, to flee to Jerusalem. So Israel rebelled against the
20 house of David, unto this day. And it came to pass, when
all Israel heard that Jeroboam was returned, that they sent
and called him unto the congregation, and made him king
over all Israel: there was none that followed the house of
David, but the tribe of Judah only.

21 And when Rehoboam was come to Jerusalem, he as-
sembled all the house of Judah, and the tribe of Benjamin,
an hundred and fourscore thousand chosen men, which were

been received into special favour by David or Solomon, such as the
descendants of Barzillai the Gileadite (2 Sam. xix. 31—40).

18. *Adoram*] Called *Adoniram* in iv. 6; v. 14. The Israelites
would take the coming of Adoram, *who was over the levy*, as a sign that
Rehoboam would continue the oppressive policy of his father. To send
such a man argues strange blindness in Rehoboam.

made speed] Rather, *strengthened himself*. The word suggests
that Rehoboam at first was stunned at the news of the assassination,
but afterwards recovered himself sufficiently to escape to Jerusalem.

20. *And it came to pass*] This verse (which is not found in the
parallel account in Chron.) is not in harmony with v. 3 on the one
hand, nor with v. 21 on the other. According to v. 3 'all the congrega-
tion of Israel' must have known of Jeroboam's return from Egypt
before the conference with Rehoboam had taken place, for they
employed him as a spokesman. According to v. 21 the tribe of
Benjamin as well as the tribe of Judah followed the house of David.
The verse is probably a gloss.

21—24 (=2 Chr. xi. 1—4). SHEMAIAH FORBIDS CIVIL WAR.

21. *house of Judah...tribe of Benjamin*] A tribe might be called
either a *house* (i.e. *household*, Heb. *bayith*, *bēth*) or a *tribe* (a unit of patri-
archal government, Heb. *shēbet*, lit. 'a sceptre'). If a particular person
is referred to (or understood) it is natural to call his tribe 'his house,' e.g.
in xi. 28 where Jeroboam the Ephraimite is mentioned; his tribe is
described as 'the *house* of Joseph.' Here it is the *house* of Judah,
because king Rehoboam the Judæan is foremost in the writer's mind.
In view of the repeated mention of *one* tribe only as being faithful to
David (xi. 13, 32, 36), we must not assume that the whole tribe of
Benjamin followed Rehoboam.

an hundred and fourscore thousand] LXX. (B), 120,000. Either
number is high, but we do not know the real significance of the numbers.

warriors, to fight against the house of Israel, to bring the kingdom again to Rehoboam the son of Solomon. But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying, Speak unto Rehoboam the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and unto all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not go up, nor fight against your brethren the children of Israel: return every man to his house; for this thing is of me. So they hearkened unto the word of the LORD, and returned and went their way, according to the word of the LORD.

A *thousand* (Jud. vi. 15, R.V. marg.; Mic. v. 2) was a tribal division, including presumably women and children, so that the fighting men of such a *thousand* can hardly have exceeded two hundred in number. If the *thousands* be thus meant for *clans* or *septs*, Rehoboam's army would not have exceeded 36,000 men, a high number but not impossible. It may be that the same method of reckoning is to be applied in v. 13, 14 and in other places.

22. *Shemaiah*] The prophet of Judah speaks in the same sense as the prophet of Israel (*Ahijah*).

man of God] A common title for a prophet (Deut. xxxiii. 1 of Moses; 1 Sam. ix. 7 of Samuel!).

23. *king of Judah*] From this point onward the historian speaks of two kingdoms, that of *Israel* consisting of the ten northern tribes, and that of *Judah* consisting of Judah and part of Benjamin. Cp. xiv. 21; xv. 9.

the rest of the people] Cp. v. 17.

25. THE MEASURES TAKEN BY JEROBOAM TO ESTABLISH HIMSELF IN HIS KINGDOM.

This section is preceded in LXX. (B) by a passage of twenty-four verses giving an account of Jeroboam somewhat after the fashion of a Midrash. The narrative is founded on various notices of Jeroboam given in Kings, but certain embellishments are added. Jeroboam whose mother was a harlot was set by Solomon over the labour of the house of Joseph. Solomon built (fortified?) Sarira, and had 300 chariots there. Jeroboam tried to set himself over the kingdom, and Solomon sought to slay him. Jeroboam fled to Shishak, who gave him to wife *Ano* sister of Tahpenes who bare him a son named Abijah. Jeroboam heard of the death of Solomon, came to Mount Ephraim to the land of Sarira, and built a fort there. His child fell ill; his wife consulted the prophet Ahijah (the story is shortened from xiv. 1—17), but as she returned to Sarira (in the Hebrew, *Tirzah*), the child died. Jeroboam went to Shechem to meet Rehoboam. *Shemaiah* (not Ahijah) tore a cloak into twelve pieces, and gave twelve (*sic*) to Jeroboam. After this the story of the conference at Shechem is told, together with the Revolt and Rehoboam's

25 Then Jeroboam built Shechem in the hill country of
 Ephraim, and dwelt therein; and he went out from thence,
 26 and built Penuel. And Jeroboam said in his heart, Now
 27 shall the kingdom return to the house of David: if this
 people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the LORD at
 Jerusalem, then shall the heart of this people turn again
 unto their lord, even unto Rehoboam king of Judah; and
 they shall kill me, and return to Rehoboam king of Judah.

abortive attempt to re-establish his authority. No serious doubt is thrown on the general accuracy of the Hebrew text by the extraordinary form presented by LXX. But it is clear that in the second century B.C., when Kings was translated into Greek, Midrashic fancy was allowed rather free play with the narratives.

25. *built Shechem*] i.e. *rebuilt it, or fortified it.* Cp. xii. 1, note.

built Penuel] Penuel was an important place east of Jordan on the north bank of the Jabbok (the Nahr Zerka) (Gen. xxxii. 22—32). The expression *he went forth* suggests some kind of military expedition. In any case the tribes east of Jordan were attached from this time onward to the northern kingdom.

26—32 (cp. 1 Chr. xi. 14, 15). THE RELIGIOUS POLICY OF JEROBOAM.

It is not to be supposed that as soon as Solomon's Temple was built all Israel began the custom of pilgrimage thither 'three times in the year' (Exod. xxiii. 14). In some cases distance would tell against Jerusalem, in others the attraction of rival sanctuaries (high places) far older than Jerusalem would be sufficiently strong to deter people from transferring their worship to the newly built Temple. Thus places in which the prophet Samuel had offered sacrifice, Mizpah, Ramah, and Gilgal, would not be forsaken at once for Solomon's sanctuary. But on the other hand the Temple in the city of David was probably unique as a building in the land of Israel, and it was bound to gather prestige and to attract fresh worshippers as the years went by. Jeroboam therefore took three far-sighted measures to restrain a growing religious practice which might prove dangerous to his power. On the whole these measures were reactionary rather than new. (1) He chose Beth-el and Dan, both of which were already regarded as holy places, to be the sanctuaries of his kingdom. (2) He made two golden symbolic images of JEHOVAH, setting one in the north (Dan), the other in the south (Beth-el) of his land. Such images were not a new thing in Israel (Jud. xvii. 1—6). (3) He allowed others beside Levites to become priests. This measure was due probably to the fact that many Levites were attracted from the northern kingdom to the Temple at Jerusalem. Jeroboam accepted the older view (Jud. xvii. 13) that a Levitical priesthood was not necessary, though it was desirable.

Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of 28 gold; and he said unto them, ¹It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem; behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in ²⁹Beth-el, and the other put he in Dan. And this thing ³⁰became a sin: for the people went *to worship* before ³¹the one, even unto Dan. And he made houses of high places, 31

¹ Or, *You have gone up long enough*

² Or, *each of them*

28. *two calves of gold*] Each a symbolic representation of JEHOVAH. Cp. Exod. xxxii. 4. The 'calf' or young bull was intended to symbolize the might of the Deity. In Gen. xlix. 24 JEHOVAH is called 'the Mighty One (*ġbîr* a variant form of *abbîr*, 'bull') of Jacob.' Cp. Isa. i. 24.

behold thy gods, O Israel, &c.] Aaron in setting up the *one* calf in the wilderness made the same speech (Exod. xxxii. 4). We must not ascribe polytheism either to Aaron or to Jeroboam because of the plural construction given to the words. The usual Heb. word for 'God' (*ġlōhîm*) is itself plural in form, and is constructed here and elsewhere (Gen. i. 26; xx. 13; Exod. xxxii. 4) with a plural verb. Such fashions of speech are no more to be regarded as plural in sense than the use of the kingly plural in our own language.

29. *Beth-el*] Beth-el (modern *Bēîm*) was on the border between Ephraim and Benjamin. Cp. Baedeker, *Palestine*, p. 213. It was conquered by the tribe of Ephraim (Joseph), Jud. i. 22, but it is reckoned to Benjamin in Josh. xviii. 21, 22. It continued a sanctuary under Jehu (2 K. x. 29) and under his descendant Jeroboam II (Amos iv. 4; vii. 10—13). Cp. Hos. x. 5 where *Beth-aven* ('house of vanity') is put satirically for *Beth-el* ('house of God').

Dan] Probably to be identified with *Tell-el-Kādi*, 'an extensive mound, 330 paces long, 270 paces wide, and 30—38 ft. above the plain' (Baedeker, *Palestine*, p. 264). The original name of Dan was Laish; the story of its conquest by the tribe of Dan is given in Jud. xviii. 7—10; 27—29. The seat of the rest of the Danites was on the north-west of the territory of Judah.

30. *became a sin*] The sin was not the worship of another god, but the deliberate encouragement of a religious schism for the sake of personal ambition; the ultimate result of Jeroboam's policy was that it *drove them from following the LORD* (2 K. xvii. 21).

went to worship before the one] The Heb. text yields no satisfactory sense, and the expression *the one* is almost certainly corrupt. Perhaps the original text was *went to present themselves before God*. If so the reference to the calf as a god was removed through the scruples of scribes.

unto Dan] i.e. to the far corner of the land instead of to the place which God had chosen.

and made priests from among all the people, which were not
 32 of the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam ordained a feast in the
 eighth month, on the fifteenth day of the month, like unto
 the feast that is in Judah, and he ¹went up unto the altar;
 so did he in Beth-el, ²sacrificing unto the calves that he had
 made; and he placed in Beth-el the priests of the high places
 33 which he had made. And he ¹went up unto the altar which
 he had made in Beth-el on the fifteenth day in the eighth

¹ Or, offered upon

² Or, to sacrifice

31. *from among all the people*] Not necessarily, of the lowest of the people (a mistranslation of A.V.), but from tribes other than Levi.

32. *in the eighth month*] 'The feast that is in Judah' with which Jeroboam's feast is compared is the Feast of Tabernacles which took place on the fifteenth day of the *seventh* month (Lev. xxiii. 39—43). The Jewish feast had a double signification; it was connected with the harvest and also with the sojourn in the wilderness. Possibly Jeroboam's feast had the same double signification. Cp. v. 28 b.

CH. XII. 33—XIV. 18 (no parallel in Chron.). JEROBOAM AND THE PROPHETS.

This passage is probably drawn, as the contents suggest, from a book of lives of the Prophets, and not from the chronicles of the kings of Israel. Such works were known to the author of the book of Chronicles, and in two cases are cited as 'Midrash,' a midrash being a story with a purpose, 'founded on fact,' a narrative of a parabolic nature written directly for edification, and not a purely historical episode. It is probable that the narratives given in these chapters are of a midrashic character. We may compare the story of the prophet Jonah told in the book of Jonah.

CH. XII. 33—XIII. 10 (no parallel in Chron.). JEROBOAM'S FESTAL SACRIFICE INTERRUPTED.

The division between chs. xii. and xiii. is unfortunate. xii. 33 in its present position seems to be a meaningless repetition of xii. 32. But the repetition is made with a purpose, and xii. 33 should be read with the following chapter. It is indeed the introduction to the narrative of xiii. 1—10, and states precisely the occasion on which Jeroboam met with the signal reproof described in these verses. It was on a public occasion when the king was taking the leading part in the feast which he himself had established in the eighth month, that the prophet from Judah broke in upon the king's proceedings, announcing the coming pollution of the altar, and inflicting temporary paralysis on the arm of the king.

The narrative is not altogether homogeneous, and vv. 3 and 5 stand

month, even in the month which he had devised¹ of his own heart: and he ordained a feast for the children of Israel, and² went up unto the altar, to burn incense.

And, behold, there came a man of God out of Judah by 13 the word of the LORD unto Beth-el: and Jeroboam was standing by the altar to burn incense. And he cried against 2 the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the LORD: Behold, a child shall be born unto the

¹ Another reading is, *apart*

² Or, *offered upon*

by themselves. v. 3 is later in style than the rest of the passage, and if it be reckoned an addition, it follows that v. 5, or at least v. 5^b which alludes to v. 3, must also be from a later hand. The 'sign' described in these verses was unnecessary; the sign of v. 4 was sufficient to cow Jeroboam (v. 6).

33. *of his own heart*] Marg. *apart*. This would mean in separation from the people of the southern kingdom whose feast was in the *seventh* month.

to burn incense] Cp. 2 Chr. xxvi. 16. This was the part taken by the chief person at a sacrifice. The cutting up of the victim, and the placing of the different portions upon the altar, was the work of the priests or of the ordinary ministers of the sanctuary.

CH. XIII.

1. *by the word of the LORD*] i.e. by the command, *or*, through the revelation of JEHOVAH. Cp. v. 17; xx. 35.

2. *Behold, a child shall be born*] In 2 K. xxiii. it is recorded that about 300 years later Josiah king of Judah destroyed Jeroboam's altar (xxiii. 15), and polluted the altar by burning upon it men's bones brought from the sepulchre (xxiii. 16). (We should have expected that this pollution of the altar would have preceded its destruction, but the events are in fact recorded in the reverse order.) The correspondence however between 1 K. xiii. and 2 K. xxiii. is not close except for the mention of the name of Josiah; in 1 K. xiii. the sacrifice of human victims (Jeroboam's priests) on Jeroboam's altar is announced, while in 2 K. xxiii. the destruction of Jeroboam's altar is recorded as the main event, and a pollution of the altar by the burning upon it of bones from the sepulchre is mentioned as though by an afterthought. It is indeed probable that in the course of transcription during hundreds of years each of the two passages has in turn influenced the other; i.e. that the name of *Josiah* has been introduced by the transcribers in 1 K. xiii. from 2 K. xxiii., and conversely that the burning of human 'bones' has been introduced into 2 K. xxiii. 16 through the influence of a misunderstanding of 1 K. xiii. (For some details see the following notes.)

house of David, Josiah by name; and upon thee shall he sacrifice the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall they burn upon thee.
 3 And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken: Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.
 4 And it came to pass, when the king heard the saying of the man of God, which he cried against the altar in Beth-el, that Jeroboam put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not draw it back again to
 5 him. The altar also was rent, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God
 6 had given by the word of the LORD. And the king answered and said unto the man of God, Intreat now the favour of the LORD thy God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again. And the man of God intreated the LORD, and the king's hand was restored him again, and

Josiah by name] It was suggested in the last note that this clause does not belong to the original text, but that it is a gloss introduced by a scribe in copying this passage to call attention to the narrative given in 2 K. xxiii. The reason for supposing that the words are a gloss is that such an introduction of a name is contrary to the analogy of Biblical prophecy. Isa. vii. 14 does not go against this analogy, for it is not a name but a significant title, which is there announced: Immanuel is a watchword ('God with us'), and not a proper name. Nor may we allege Isa. xlv. 18, though Cyrus is mentioned by name there, for convincing reasons have been brought forward for ascribing Isa. xl. ff. not to Isaiah son of Amoz, but to a prophet contemporary with Cyrus. We may say generally that the predictions of the Old Testament are couched in general terms and set forth great principles of God's working. Details of name and place and date are conspicuously lacking in them.

and men's bones shall they burn upon thee] Or, *and men's bodies &c.* The statement may refer either to the burning of the *bodies* of men, i.e. of the priests of the high places who were to be *sacrificed* beside the altar of Bethel (cp. 2 K. xxiii. 20), or it may (less probably) refer to such a deliberate burning of the remains of men long dead as is recorded in 2 K. xxiii. 16.

3. *the same day*] Rather, *on that day*, the day of Jeroboam's feast.
shall be rent] Not destroyed, but *rent*, allowing the fat and ashes of the fire to escape, and (presumably) the fire itself to be quenched.

the ashes] The mingled ashes of the wood and the fat of the victim.

4. *dried up*] LXX. ἐξηράθη. Cp. Mark iii. 1.

became as it was before. And the king said unto the man 7 of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward. And the man of God said unto the 8 king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: for so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, 9 saying, Thou shalt eat no bread, nor drink water, neither return by the way that thou camest. So he went another 10 way, and returned not by the way that he came to Beth-el.

Now there dwelt an old prophet in Beth-el; and ¹one of 11 his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Beth-el: the words which he had spoken unto the king, them also they told unto their father. And their father said unto them, What way went he? ²Now 12 his sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah. And he said unto his sons, Saddle me 13 the ass. So they saddled him the ass: and he rode thereon. And he went after the man of God, and found him sitting 14 under an ³oak: and he said unto him, Art thou the man of

¹ Heb. *his son*
his sons shewed him

² According to some ancient versions, *And*
³ Or, *terebinth*

8. *in this place*] i.e. in Beth-el, the seat of the calf-worship. To eat at this time in Beth-el would involve feasting off the victims of the sacrifice, and so joining in the worship, against which he had come to protest.

9. *by the way that thou camest*] The instructions imply that the prophet is to execute his commission as quickly as possible and to avoid as much as possible all intercourse with the people of the Northern kingdom, especially at the time of their great feast.

11—22. THE LYING PROPHET OF BETH-EL.

11. *one of his sons*] Heb. *his son*. The unexpected change in the Hebrew of this verse from singular to plural is perhaps a sign of some fault in the text. Instead of the final words, *them also they told unto their father*, LXX. has 'and they persuaded their father,' i.e. made him desire to see the prophet from Judah.

12. *Now his sons had seen*] LXX. *and his sons shew (shewed) him*. The difference between these two renderings represents only the change of one vowel point in the Hebrew.

14. *an oak*] Rather, *the terebinth*. Large trees being rare in Palestine often served as land-marks. In some cases they were the better known because altars were erected under them. Cp. Jud. iv. 5 ('the palm tree of Deborah'); 1 Sam. xxii. 6 ('the tamarisk tree in Ramah'); xxxi. 13 ('the tamarisk tree in Jabesh').

15 God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am. Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread.
 16 And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in
 17 this place: for it was said to me by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn
 18 again to go by the way that thou camest. And he said unto him, I also am a prophet as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink
 19 water. *But* he lied unto him. So he went back with him,
 20 and did eat bread in his house, and drank water. And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the
 21 LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back: and he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast ¹been disobedient unto the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded
 22 thee, but camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place of the which he said to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto
 23 the sepulchre of thy fathers. And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, *to wit*, for the prophet whom he had brought

¹ Or, rebelled against the word

17. *by the word of the LORD*] Cp. v. 1, note.

19. *went back*] i.e. to Beth-el.

did eat bread...and drank water] This phrase is not to be understood literally; it is used to describe a set meal, which perhaps in this case consisted of flesh from the recent sacrifice. Cp. 2 K. vi. 22; xxv. 19; Luke xiv. 15. The prophet from Judah would thus join in the worship which he had condemned.

20. *as they sat*] In New Testament times the Jews did not sit at meals, but reclined at table on couches. The same custom was also practised in Old Testament times, at least among the rich. Cp. Amos ii. 8; vi. 4—6. But the old Hebrews usually employ the word *yāshab* 'sit' not *shāchab* 'recline,' and probably the people of simpler habits did sit at table in order to take food. Occasionally however *yāshab* itself implies a reclining posture, e.g. in Esth. iii. 15 it is said that the Persian king and Haman 'sat down' to drink wine. Cp. Esth. i. 6 where there is a reference to the *couches* on which those who drank wine reclined.

22. *carcase*] The Old English equivalent for 'corpse.'

back. And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, 24
 and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the
 ass stood by it; the lion also stood by the carcase. And, 25
 behold, men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way,
 and the lion standing by the carcase: and they came and
 told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt. And when 26
 the prophet that brought him back from the way heard
 thereof, he said, It is the man of God, who ¹was disobedient
 unto the mouth of the LORD: therefore the LORD hath
 delivered him unto the lion, which hath torn him, and slain
 him, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake
 unto him. And he spake to his sons, saying, Saddle me 27
 the ass. And they saddled it. And he went and found his 28
 carcase cast in the way, and the ass and the lion standing
 by the carcase: the lion had not eaten the carcase, nor torn
 the ass. And the prophet took up the carcase of the man 29
 of God, and laid it upon the ass, and brought it back: and
 he came to the city of the old prophet, to mourn, and to
 bury him. And he laid his carcase in his own grave; and 30
 they mourned over him, saying, Alas, my brother! And it 31
 came to pass, after he had buried him, that he spake to his
 sons, saying, When I am dead, then bury me in the sepul-
 chre wherein the man of God is buried; lay my bones
 beside his bones. For the saying which he cried by the 32
 word of the LORD against the altar in Beth-el, and against
 all the houses of the high places which are in the cities of
 Samaria, shall surely come to pass.

¹ Or, rebelled against the word

23—32. THE FATE OF THE DISOBEDIENT PROPHET.

25. *in the city*] i.e. in Beth-el.

28. *had not eaten the carcase*] The punishment announced for the prophet was a modified one (v. 22); his body was to meet with burial, only not in the sepulchre of his fathers.

29. *he came to the city*] It is noticeable that the significant name of the city (*Beth-el* 'house of God') is not introduced between v. 17 and v. 32.

30. *Alas, my brother*] Cp. Jer. xxii. 18, where E.V. *Ah!* stands for the same Heb. interjection.

31. *beside his bones*] LXX. adds, 'that my bones may be spared with his bones.' The false prophet's foresight was justified; the sepulchre was spared by Josiah (2 K. xxiii. 17, 18).

32. *and against... Samaria* (Heb. *Shomeron*)] These words appear

33 After this thing Jeroboam returned not from his evil way, but made again from among all the people priests of the high places: ¹whosoever would, he consecrated him, 34 that there might be priests of the high places. And ²this thing became sin unto the house of Jeroboam, even to cut it off, and to destroy it from off the face of the earth.

¹ Or, *whomsoever he would*

² Or, *by this thing he became*

to be a late addition to the narrative made by a transcriber who wished to trace a connexion between this passage and 2 K. xxiii. 19. The prophet from Judah prophesied against Jeroboam's altar at Beth-el, not against high places in general. Cp. *vv.* 2, 3. Moreover the expression 'cities of *Samaria*' is an anachronism, for the importance of *Samaria* dates from the reign of Omri. Cp. *xvi.* 34. Not till a still later time was the use of the name *Samaria* extended so as to apply (as in this passage) to the territory of the Northern Kingdom as a whole. Cp. *xxi.* 1; 2 K. *xvii.* 24; *xxiii.* 19.

33, 34. THE WARNING UNHEEDED BY JEROBOAM.

33. *from among all the people*] Cp. *xii.* 31.

he consecrated him] Lit. *he filled his hand*. This phrase is used to describe the making of a priest. Moses is directed (Exod. *xxviii.* 41) to carry out three ceremonies over those who are designated to be priests, (1) 'thou shalt anoint them, and (2) fill their hand (*or* consecrate them) and (3) sanctify them.' The ceremony of consecration was to be carried out with a victim called 'the ram of consecration' (Exod. *xxix.* 32). This was to be slain, and the choice parts were to be put into the hands of those who were to be made priests. Moses was then to wave these choice parts before the LORD, doubtless by gently swaying the hands of those who held them (Exod. *xxix.* 22—24). Probably the ceremony used by Jeroboam was substantially the same.

34. *this thing became sin unto the house*] Render, **This became the sin of the house**. The sin is personified as an avenger who accomplishes the destruction of the sinner. Cp. Gen. *iv.* 7; Num. *xxxii.* 33, 'Be sure your sin will find you out'; and Job *viii.* 4, R.V.

CH. XIV. 1—18. THE DEATH OF THE SON OF JEROBOAM.

Jeroboam in this story acts as one who has an evil conscience. He fears that if he applies in his own name to Ahijah, he will be repulsed with an announcement of evil. Accordingly he attempts to obtain a favourable answer by dissimulation in the belief that the seer will not be able to recall a promise of good once given.

The prophet's answer in the form in which it is given in *vv.* 7—16 shews traces of an editor's hand; thus *vv.* 9, 15 suggest a later age than the days of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. (See notes below.) This passage

At that time Abijah the son of Jeroboam fell sick. And Jeroboam said to his wife, Arise, I pray thee, and disguise thyself, that thou be not known to be the wife of Jeroboam: and get thee to Shiloh; behold, there is Ahijah the prophet, which spake concerning me that I should be king over this people. And take with thee ten loaves, and cracknels, and a¹ cruse of honey, and go to him: he shall tell thee what shall become of the child. And Jeroboam's wife did so, and arose, and went to Shiloh, and came to the house of Ahijah.

¹ Or, bottle

however, if not an accurate report of the answer of Ahijah, is at least a penetrating estimate of the results of the religious policy of Jeroboam. In the early days of Israel's sojourn in Canaan the high places had been found to be a danger to purity of worship. Formerly they were the sanctuaries of Canaanite deities, and idolatrous associations still clung to them. Even if men now professed in every case to worship JEHOVAH, yet local usage made differences, and it was hard for a simple people to realise that the JEHOVAH of one high place was identical with the JEHOVAH of another, at which different traditions lingered. So the erection of the Temple at Jerusalem was a step forward in the religious history of the chosen people, for it tended to draw their religious energies toward one centre, and so to help them to realise the Unity of the God of Israel. Jeroboam on the other hand by setting up the calves at Dan and Beth-el gave a fresh impulse to the use of high places, and checked the tendency towards unity of worship which had been set in motion by the work of Solomon. In time the idolatrous associations of the high places asserted their power, and Israel made other gods and rejected JEHOVAH (v. 9), and so suffered the punishment assigned to apostasy (v. 15).

1. *At that time*] According to LXX. the illness of Ahijah took place before Jeroboam was designated by a prophet to be king and before the revolt of the Ten Tribes at Shechem. But the severity of the punishment announced both in LXX. and in the Heb. text agrees best with a later date, when Jeroboam had reigned and shewn himself to be what he was.

2. *Shiloh*] Cp. xi. 29, note.

3. *take with thee*] It was usual to offer a present to a seer for consulting him (1 Sam. ix. 7, 8; 2 K. v. 5). Jeroboam's wife takes such gifts as any person of no consequence might offer, to suit her disguise.

cracknels] LXX. 'cakes for his children.'

cruse] Heb. *bakkūk*. The precise meaning of the word is doubtful. The translation *cruse* suggests that a *pot* of earthenware is meant, while *bottle* suggests a vessel of leather like the wineskins of Mark ii.

22. Cp. xvii. 12, note.

Now Ahijah could not see; for his eyes were set by reason
 5 of his age. And the LORD said unto Ahijah, Behold, the
 wife of Jeroboam cometh to inquire of thee concerning her
 son; for he is sick: thus and thus shalt thou say unto her:
 for it shall be, when she cometh in, that she shall feign
 6 herself to be another woman. And it was so, when Ahijah
 heard the sound of her feet, as she came in at the door,
 that he said, Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest
 thou thyself to be another? for I am sent to thee with heavy
 7 tidings. Go, tell Jeroboam, Thus saith the LORD, the God
 of Israel: Forasmuch as I exalted thee from among the
 8 people, and made thee ¹prince over my people Israel, and
 rent the kingdom away from the house of David, and gave it
 thee: and yet thou hast not been as my servant David, who
 kept my commandments, and who followed me with all his
 9 heart, to do that only which was right in mine eyes; but
 hast done evil above all that were before thee, and hast
 gone and made thee other gods, and molten images, to
 provoke me to anger, and hast cast me behind thy back:
 10 therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon the house of
 Jeroboam, and will cut off from Jeroboam every man child,
 him that is shut up and him that is left at large in Israel,

¹ Or, leader

4. were set] 1 Sam. iv. 15.

7. prince] Cp. i. 35, note.

9. above all that were before thee] These words might be suitably addressed to one of the later successors of Jeroboam, but as spoken to Jeroboam himself, the first of a line of kings, they are an anachronism. In the same way the accusation of having made *other gods* could not be justly brought against the man whose sin was that he made two golden calves each representing JEHOVAH. This verse, together with v. 15 (q.v.), must have been written some time after the reign of Jeroboam I, and most probably with a view to the reign of Jeroboam II, to which vv. 9 and 15 are quite suitable.

10. him that is shut up and him that is left at large] Heb. 'āqur w'āzūb (xxi. 21; 2 K. ix. 8; xiv. 26; Deut. xxxii. 36). This is a phrase implying universality; it means 'every man without exception,' or (with a negative) 'no man at all.' Cp. Rev. xiii. 16, 'the free and the bond.' Literally it means, 'him that is under restraint, and him that is not under restraint.' The restraint might be religious (as of a person under a vow), or social (as of a servant), or literal (as of a prisoner), or not literal (as of one restrained in his movements through

and will utterly sweep away the house of Jeroboam, as a man sweepeth away dung, till it be all gone. Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the LORD hath spoken it. Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine house: *and* when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die. And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him; for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave: because in him there is found some good thing toward the LORD, the God of Israel, in the house of Jeroboam. More over the LORD shall raise him up a king over Israel, who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam that day: ¹but what? even now. For the LORD shall smite Israel, as a reed is shaken in the water; and he shall root up Israel out of this good land, which he gave to their fathers, and shall scatter them beyond the River; because they have made their Asherim, provoking the LORD to anger. And he shall give

¹ Or, *and what even now?*

fear of an enemy). Under this last head perhaps is to be reckoned 1 Chr. xii. 1 (marg. *shut up*, of David) and Jer. xxxvi. 5.

11. *the dogs*] In eastern cities, as for instance in the Jerusalem of the present day, troops of large dogs act as scavengers in the streets particularly at night. Domesticated dogs are all-but unknown. Cp. xxi. 23; 2 K. ix. 35, 36; Ps. lix. 14, 15.

the fowls of the air] In the East 'the birds' or 'the fowls' are represented to a large extent by ravens and vultures, which (like the dogs) are flesh eaters and scavengers. Cp. Gen. xl. 17—19; 2 Sam. xxi. 10.

15. *shall come to the grave*] Cp. xiii. 22.

14. *over Israel*] Or, *against Israel*. The expression, 'The LORD shall raise up a king *against* Israel,' suggests a *foreign* king; this would agree with v. 15, where a captivity of Israel in foreign lands is spoken of.

that day] Rather, *to-day*; the punishment threatened is near. The last four words of the verse were probably added as a note by someone who lived at the time when this punishment was inflicted.

15. *as a reed is shaken*] Cp. Matt. xi. 7.

he shall root up] This and the words that follow refer to the captivity of Israel by the Assyrians (2 K. xvii. 1—23); they do not apply to the punishment executed on the house of Jeroboam by Baasha (xv. 25—30).

beyond the River] i.e. to the east of the Euphrates. Cp. iv. 21, note.

Asherim] See v. 23, note.

Israel up because of the sins of Jeroboam, ¹ which he hath
 17 sinned, and wherewith he hath made Israel to sin. And
 Jeroboam's wife arose, and departed, and came to Tirzah:
and as she came to the threshold of the house, the child
 18 died. And all Israel buried him, and mourned for him;
 according to the word of the LORD, which he spake by the
 19 hand of his servant Ahijah the prophet. And the rest of
 the acts of Jeroboam, how he warred, and how he reigned,
 behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the
 20 kings of Israel. And the days which Jeroboam reigned
 were two and twenty years: and he slept with his fathers,
 and Nadab his son reigned in his stead.

¹ Or, *who did sin, and why made &c.*

16. *he shall give Israel up*] An impossible rendering, though supported by LXX. Vulg. Targ. Peshitta. There is an aposiopesis in the Hebrew, caused perhaps by the loss of a word from the text: render, *he shall make Israel like* —. Perhaps the missing word is *kaggālāl*, 'sicut fimum.' Cp. v. 10. This word being followed by *biggāl*, 'because of,' would easily be mistaken for a dittography and omitted by a hasty scribe.

the sins of Jeroboam] Cp. 2 K. xvii. 21—23.

17. *Tirzah*] Jeroboam's capital was at Shechem for Western Palestine, and at Penuel for the East of Jordan. Tirzah (site unknown) was perhaps a pleasure residence. Cp. S. of S. vi. 4 ('beautiful as Tirzah'). Tirzah was a residence for Baasha (xv. 21), Elah (xvi. 8), and Zimri (xvi. 15). Omri, after reigning for six years in Tirzah, built Samaria.

18. *mourned for him*] Cp. xiii. 30.

19, 20. THE EPILOGUE TO JEROBOAM'S REIGN.

19. *how he warred*] No wars of Jeroboam are narrated in Kings, but there is a suggestion of a warlike expedition in the language of xii. 25, and in 2 Chr. xiii. 2—10 an account is given of a war with Abijah (Abijam), the successor of Rehoboam.

the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel] Frequently mentioned in the subsequent chapters (xv. 31; *al*). See the Introduction, § 3, on the Sources.

21—31 (cp. 2 Chr. xii. 13; 2—11; 15, 16). THE CHARACTER OF REHOBAM'S REIGN. THE INVASION OF SHISHAK. REHOBAM'S DEATH.

Under Rehoboam foreign religious practices increased in Judah (v. 22). The Queen Mother, whose influence no doubt was great, was an Ammonitess.

The Egyptian invasion was due to a partial revival of Egypt. A chief

And Rehoboam the son of Solomon reigned in Judah. 21
 Rehoboam was forty and one years old when he began to
 reign, and he reigned seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city
 which the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, to
 put his name there: and his mother's name was Naamah the
 Ammonitess. And Judah did that which was evil in the 22
 sight of the LORD; and they provoked him to jealousy with
 their sins which they committed, above all that their fathers
 had done. For they also built them high places, and ¹pillars, 23

¹ Or, *obelisks*

of Libyan mercenaries named Sheshonk (Shishak) took the kingdom out of the feeble hands of the native king, and founded the Twenty-second dynasty. Palestine was perhaps nominally subject to Egypt in the days of Solomon, but when the Israelite kingdom was divided, Shishak seized the opportunity of making the power of Egypt felt. 'In the fifth year of Rehoboam, probably about 926 B.C., he invaded Palestine. His campaign penetrated no further north than the latitude of the Sea of Galilee and extended eastward probably as far as Mahanaim on the east of Jordan....Sheshonk was able to return with great plunder with which to replenish the long depleted Pharaonic coffers.' Breasted, *History of Egypt*, pp. 529, 530.

21. *in Judah*] Or, *over Judah*. Cp. xii. 23, note.
the city &c.] The emphasis laid on the holiness of Jerusalem serves to bring out the contrast with the corrupt religious practices permitted by Rehoboam. Cp. vv. 22—24.

to put his name there] Cp. v. 5, note.

the Ammonitess] Cp. xi. 1, 5, 7.

22. *provoked him to jealousy*] That God is a *jealous God* (Exod. xx. 5) is an anthropopathic way of stating a fundamental principle of the religion of the Old Testament, namely, that worship is to be paid to one God only. This principle was impressed upon Israel as a preparation for the reception of the truth that there is but One God. The doctrine of the Unity of the Deity was indeed so repugnant to the Semitic mind, that a long course of preparation was needed before Israel could receive it in its fulness. First came the command to worship one God only, next the choice of one place only for his worship, and finally the revelation that God is One and there is none other than He.

23. *high places*] Cp. xi. 7, note.

pillars, and Asherim]. Both are frequently mentioned in the Old Testament as instruments of unlawful worship. In Deut. xvi. 21, 22 the prohibition is given, 'Thou shalt not plant thee an *Asherah* of any kind of tree beside the altar of the LORD thy God...neither shalt thou set up a *pillar*.' Further, in Deut. xii. 3 Israel is charged to break down the *altars* of the Canaanites, to dash in pieces their *pillars*, burn

their *Asherim* in the fire, and hew down the *graven images* of their gods. From these passages and others it appears (1) that *pillars* and *Asherim* are both distinct from images in the ordinary sense of the word and also from altars, and (2) that while the *Asherim* were of wood and could be burnt, the *pillars* could only be broken, and were probably of stone (Gen. xxviii. 18). The *pillars* and the *Asherim* formed part of the furniture of the high places. The *pillars* (Hebrew *maççëbôth*) were, it seems, commemorative. Jacob erected one at Bethel in commemoration of his vision and of his vow (Gen. xxviii. 18); Moses raised twelve *pillars*, one in the name of each of the tribes of Israel in commemoration of the covenant made at Sinai (Exod. xxiv. 4), Isaiah predicts that one day there shall be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a *pillar* at the border thereof to the LORD' (Isa. xix. 19).

Recent excavations in Palestine have laid bare some three or four high places, and with them a number of monoliths which (it can hardly be doubted) are the *maççëbôth* of the Old Testament. At Petra (Sela) two of these mark the entrance to the holy place, at Tell-es-Safi (supposed to be the ancient Gath) three stand in a row within the temple area, at Gezer eight stand still in alignment, the remains of a larger number, while on the supposed site of Megiddo Dr Schumacher has unearthed 'rows of monoliths.' At Gezer these pillars vary from 10 feet 9 inches to 5 feet 5 inches in height. Of the smallest of these Mr R. A. S. Macalister (*P. E. F. Quarterly Statement* for 1903, page 28) writes, 'By polished surfaces it shews plain evidence, lacking in all the other stones, of having been kissed, anointed, rubbed, or otherwise handled on the top by worshippers.' Jacob moreover is said to have poured oil on the top of his *maççëbâh* (Gen. xxviii. 18. Cp. Lev. viii. 10, 11). The famous black stone in the Kaaba of Mecca is kissed or touched by Moslems on pilgrimage. It seems, therefore, that a *pillar* or *maççëbâh* might be looked on as specially sacred, though it was, strictly speaking, neither an image nor an altar.

Pillars in their commemorative character could indeed be reconciled with the monotheistic and non-idolatrous religion of Israel, and it was only owing to their associations that they were forbidden. They were found in use on every high hill and under every green tree in the worship of the gods of Canaan. Harmless in themselves they were to Israel the thin edge of the wedge of idolatry.

It is more difficult to decide exactly what an *Asherah* was. Probably the word when used side by side with *maççëbâh*, 'pillar,' denotes 'the wooden symbol of a goddess' (Revisers' Preface to the Old Testament). This symbol was often placed beside an altar of Baal, probably because the goddess indicated by it was regarded as Baal's consort (xvi. 32, 33; 2 K. xxi. 3; Jud. vi. 25). What kind of a symbol this was is uncertain, but it is suggested that the *Asherim* resembled the sacred poles shewn on an engraved stone found on the site of Carthage (Nowack, *Heb. Archæologie*, Vol. II. p. 19). These poles have the form of tree-trunks with a wide base mounted on a stand (possibly of stone) and surmounted by a representation of the crescent

and Asherim, on every high hill, and under every green tree; and there were also sodomites in the land: they did according to all the abominations of the nations which the LORD drave out before the children of Israel. And it came to pass in the fifth year of king Rehoboam, that Shishak king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem: and he took away the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house; he even took away all: and he took away all the shields of gold which Solomon had made. And king

moon standing on the full moon. A stone with a socket suitable for receiving such a pole found in closest proximity to the alignment of monoliths uncovered at Gezer has been conjectured to be the stand of an Asherah. That an Asherah was not a mere pole is evident from such passages as 2 K. xxi. 3, 7, where the same object is first called simply *ashērah*, and afterwards *pesel ha-ashērah*, 'the carved *asherah*.' The rendering 'grove,' though supported by LXX. (*ἄλος*) and Vulg. (*lucus*), is undoubtedly wrong. Cp. Robertson Smith *Religion of the Semites*, p. 186 ff.; also Lagrange, *Études sur les religions sémitiques*, p. 171 ff. (with illustration). It is now generally agreed that in a few places of the Old Testament *Asherah* is differently used, namely, as the name of a goddess, perhaps the goddess of good fortune, who was, it may be, identified in some parts of Syria with Ashtoreth. Cp. xv. 13; xviii. 19.

green tree] i.e. a large and flourishing tree. Cp. Ps. xcii. 14 ('full of sap and green'). See also xiii. 14, note.

24. *sodomites*] Heb. *kādēsh* (pl. *kādēshīm*). Male and female prostitutes were attached to certain Syrian temples; their gains were part of the temple revenue. The Israelites were expressly forbidden to copy this practice (Deut. xxiii. 17, 18).

25. *Shishak*] Cp. xi. 40, note. Though he harboured Jeroboam when he fled to him as a fugitive, he shewed no favour (if we may believe his own inscription) to Jeroboam during this expedition, for his list of conquered places includes some cities of the Northern as well as of the Southern kingdom. His army is reckoned (2 Chr. xii. 3) at 1200 chariots, 60,000 horsemen, and 'people without number.' Cp. Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt*, III. 233, 234.

26. *he took away*] This expression suggests that Shishak first took Jerusalem itself. If Rehoboam had bought off an attack, we should expect the passage to read, *and Rehoboam gave him &c.* But the expedition, as a German writer says, was a *Raubzug*, 'plundering march,' and not a campaign of conquest.

the shields of gold] In x. 16, 17 *targets* as well as *shields* of gold are mentioned. Whether the *targets* are to be understood as included here under the term *shields* cannot be decided. The *targets* may, on the other hand, have been used as treasure by Solomon or Rehoboam, before Shishak came.

Rehoboam made in their stead shields of brass, and committed them to the hands of the captains of the 'guard, which kept the door of the king's house. And it was so, that as oft as the king went into the house of the LORD, the guard bare them, and brought them back into the guard chamber. Now the rest of the acts of Rehoboam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam continually. And Rehoboam slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and his mother's name was Naamah the Ammonitess. And 'Abijam his son reigned in his stead.

15 Now in the eighteenth year of king Jeroboam the son

¹ Heb. *runners*

² In 2 Chr. xii. 16, *Abijah*

27. *the guard*] LXX. τῶν παρατρεχόντων, 'running attendants.' A runner (in Arabic *sais*, pronounced *syce*) is a servant who runs before the chariot of a king or great man with a wand to clear the way, a sight which may be seen to-day in Egypt and other eastern countries. The number of such runners depends on the state of the person before whose chariot they run. The kings of Israel armed them and used them as guards. Cp. i. 5; 2 K. xi. 4; 1 Sam. viii. 11; xxii. 17.

29. *the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah*] Of course a book distinct from that kept in Israel. Cp. v. 19.

30. *there was war*] Shemaiah might put a stop to Rehoboam's great expedition (xii. 21—24), but he could not prevent a bickering frontier war being continued over many years.

31. *Abijam*] LXX. Ἀβιού, i.e. *Abijahu*. In 2 Chr. xii. 16; Matt. i. 7, *Abijah* in agreement with LXX., for most Heb. names ending in *-jah* (*iah*) can be written with an additional final *u*. But *Abijam* is probably the more correct form.

CH. XV. 1—8 (cp. 2 Chr. xiii. 1, 2; 21, 22; xiv. 1).

THE REIGN OF ABIJAM (ABIJAH).

The account of Abijam given here is confined to a few names, to a condemnation of his religious policy, and to the bare statement that he had wars with Jeroboam. In Chron. however this outline is partly filled in with the account of a great defeat inflicted upon Jeroboam by his adversary. The story however, like several of the accounts given in Chron., seems to be of a midrashic character. The chief details, namely, the numbers engaged, the points of Abijah's speech, and the statement that Beth-el was captured are improbable.

of Nebat began Abijam to reign over Judah. Three years² reigned he in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was¹ Maacah the daughter of² Abishalom. And he walked in³ all the sins of his father, which he had done before him: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father. Nevertheless for David's sake⁴ did the LORD his God give him a lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem: because⁵ David did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite. Now there was war between⁶ Rehoboam and Jeroboam all the days of his life. And the rest of the acts⁷ of Abijam, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And there was war between Abijam and Jeroboam. And Abijam slept⁸

¹ In 2 Chr. xiii. 2, *Micaiah the daughter of Uriel*.

² In 2 Chr. xi. 20, 21, *Absalom* ³ According to some authorities, *Abijam*

2. *Three years*] This is inclusive reckoning such as was usual among the Hebrews, for Abijam became king in the eighteenth and died in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel.

Maacah] In 2 Chr. xiii. 2 her name is given as *Micaiah daughter of Uriel of Gibeah*, but this is probably a mistake, for in 2 Chr. xi. 20 it is *Maacah daughter of Absalom (= of Abishalom)*. She ranked as queen mother during part of the reign of her grandson Asa (v. 13).

3. *all the sins of his father*] Cp. xiv. 22, note.

4. *for David's sake*] In the book of Kings it is taught that any great sin (particularly the sin of unfaithfulness to JEHOVAH) is visited with temporal punishment. Therefore anything like the prosperity of the wicked is a difficulty. That the unfaithful Rehoboam should be able to hand on his throne to the unfaithful Abijam seems to require an explanation; it was, says the writer, owing to God's remembrance of the faithfulness of David. Cp. the very interesting passage on the successes of Jeroboam II (2 K. xiv. 23 ff.).

a lamp] Cp. xi. 36, note.

5. *save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite*] This qualification is absent from LXX. and is perhaps a gloss. David is praised without qualification in xi. 34, 38.

6. *Now there was war &c.*] This is a variant of xiv. 30, inserted here by mistake. It is absent from LXX.

7. *And there was war &c.*] Cp. 2 Chr. xiii. 2-20, where some account of the war is given.

with his fathers; and they buried him in the city of David: and Asa his son reigned in his stead.

9 And in the twentieth year of Jeroboam king of Israel
10 began Asa to reign over Judah. And forty and one years
reigned he in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Maacah
11 the daughter of Abishalom. And Asa did that which was
12 right in the eyes of the LORD, as did David his father. And
he put away the sodomites out of the land, and removed all
13 the idols that his fathers had made. And also Maacah his
mother he removed from being ¹queen, because she had

¹ Or, *queen mother*

9—24. THE REIGN OF ASA.

The reign of Asa was important in two particulars. In the first place he reversed the religious policy of Abijam and Rehoboam and of the later years of Solomon, and returned to the standard of religious conduct set by David. Under him the royal patronage of foreign worships entirely ceased. He trained up a son of like mind, Jehoshaphat, to continue his policy. Secondly, he set the evil precedent of inviting a foreign king to turn the scale of war between Israel and Judah. Disaster ensued in a later century when Ahaz followed this precedent by calling in the terrible Assyrians.

Asa is judged altogether favourably in Kings, but in Chron. he is regarded as having shewn a lack of faith in relying on the king of Syria (2 Chr. xvi. 7 ff.).

9—15 (cp. 2 Chr. xiv. 2—5; xv. 16—18). THE REIGN OF ASA: HIS RELIGIOUS POLICY.

10. *his mother's name was Maacah the daughter of Abishalom*] The same statement is made regarding his father Abijam. We may conclude that Maacah was mother of Abijam and grandmother of Asa. She retained the position of queen mother for part of her grandson's reign (v. 13), probably owing to her strength of character. We gather from 2 Chr. xi. 21 that she had exercised great influence over her husband Rehoboam. Perhaps the idolatry referred to in xiv. 22 was due to her. Cp. v. 13.

12. *the sodomites*] Cp. xiv. 24, note.

the idols] Heb. *gillûlim*, 'rollers,' from *gâlal*, 'roll.' It is perhaps a contemptuous name for images, 'logs' or stone pillars, which may be rolled.

13. *queen*] Or, *queen mother* (marg.); Heb. *gêbîrah*, 'great lady.' The king's mother is nearly always an important person in polygamous countries, because her position is unique and established. The king's favourite wife may for a while rival the king's mother, but her position is not equally secure. Cp. ii. 19; 2 K. xi. 1, note; xxiv. 15; Jer. xxii. 24—26.

made an abominable image ¹for an Asherah; and Asa cut down her image, and burnt it at the brook Kidron. But the ¹⁴ high places were not taken away: nevertheless the heart of Asa was perfect with the LORD all his days. And he brought ¹⁵ into the house of the LORD the things that his father had dedicated, and the things that himself had dedicated, silver, ¹⁶ and gold, and vessels. And there was war between Asa and ¹⁶ Baasha king of Israel all their days. And Baasha king of ¹⁷ Israel went up against Judah, and built Ramah, that he might not suffer any to go out or come in to Asa king of Judah. Then Asa took all the silver and the gold that were ¹⁸ left in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and delivered them into the hand of his servants: and king Asa sent them to Ben-hadad, the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion, king of Syria,

¹ Or, for Asherah

for an Asherah] Rather as marg., for Asherah (a goddess). Cp. xviii. 19, note.

the brook Kidron] LXX. 'the winter torrent (ῥῆ χειμῶν) of Kidron.' This is a ravine on the east of Jerusalem, shallow towards the north, but deepening towards the south, separating the city from the mount of Olives. At the present day the ravine is partly filled up with debris, and the upper part is dry. In our Lord's time it was spoken of as a winter torrent (John xviii. 1). It is frequently mentioned in the history (ii. 37; 2 K. xxiii. 6; 2 Sam. xv. 23). It was probably regarded as an unclean place; perhaps in ancient times as now it was used as a burying ground. In Joel iii. 2, 12 it is called the *valley of Jehoshaphat*.

¹⁴ *the high places*] These were sanctuaries of the kind usual in Canaan (xi. 7, note); they were not necessarily idolatrous. Cp. iii. 4; 1 Sam. ix. 14, 19. On the other hand, experience shewed that superstition and idolatry flourished in them.

¹⁵ *into the house of the LORD*] Cp. vii. 51. They were brought in and placed in the treasury.

16—24 (= 2 Chr. xvi. 1—6). WAR WITH BAASHA. ASA'S DEATH.

¹⁷ *Ramah*] Probably to be identified with the village of *Er-Rām*, situated on a commanding height about two hours due north of Jerusalem. About 35 minutes east of *Er-Rām* is *Jeba*, which is probably to be identified with *Geba of Benjamin* mentioned in v. 22. Cp. Baedeker, *Palestine*, page 212.

¹⁸ *that were left*] Cp. v. 15 and xiv. 26.

the son of Tabrimmon, the son of Hezion] It is a little surprising that the genealogy does not mention Rezon who reigned in Damascus in Solomon's time (xi. 23, 24). It has been suggested that there is a

19 that dwelt at Damascus, saying, ¹There is a league between me and thee, between my father and thy father: behold, I have sent unto thee a present of silver and gold; go, break thy league with Baasha king of Israel, that he may depart
20 from me. And Ben-hadad hearkened unto king Asa, and sent the captains of his armies against the cities of Israel, and smote Ijon, and Dan, and Abel-beth-maacah, and all
21 Chinneroth, with all the land of Naphtali. And it came to pass, when Baasha heard thereof, that he left off building of
22 Ramah, and dwelt in Tirzah. Then king Asa made a proclamation unto all Judah; none was exempted: and they

¹ Or, Let there be

corruption in the text (*Hexion* = *Hexron* = *Reson*), and that the same person is meant. LXX. (A) however reads *Hasael*, and it is not improbable that a new dynasty had arisen in Damascus. The name *Tabrimmon* is compounded with the name of *Rimmon* (*Rammān*), the storm god (2 K. v. 18).

that dwelt at Damascus] Syria was divided into several kingdoms, so that it is necessary to specify which king is meant. Cp. x. 29, note.

19. *There is a league*] Or, *Let there be a league* (marg.); LXX. *Δίδου διαθήκην*, 'make thou a covenant.'

20. *Ijon...Chinneroth*] This district corresponds roughly with that devastated by Tiglath-pileser of Assyria (2 K. xv. 29). The territory of Naphtali reached to the extreme north of the land of Israel, and lay open to easy attack from the Syrians of Damascus.

Ijon] 2 K. xv. 29. Probably the name of the city is preserved in the modern *Merj 'Ijun* (or '*Ajun*'), a high green valley running north and south between the river *Litāny* (on the west) and the upper reaches of the Jordan (or *Hasbani*, on the east). Cp. Baedeker, *Palestine*, page 297.

Dan] Cp. xii. 29, note.

Abel-beth-maacah] 2 K. xv. 29; 2 Sam. xx. 14, 15. The exact site is not known.

all Chinnerōth] The form of this word is plural; the singular is *Chinnereth*. *Chinnereth* is mentioned as one of the fenced cities (fortresses) of Naphtali in Josh. xix. 35; and in Num. xxxiv. 11 the *Yām Chinnereth*, 'Sea of Chinnereth,' is mentioned as forming part of the eastern border of Western Palestine. *All Chinneroth* means no doubt all the parts near to the city and the sea. The sea meant here is the *lake of Gennesaret* of the New Testament (Luke v. 1); the district is called Gennesaret in Mark vi. 53.

21. *dwelt in Tirzah*] LXX., 'returned to Tirzah,' which corresponds to a slightly different Heb. reading.

22. *made a proclamation unto all Judah*] i.e. summoned all Judah to undertake a piece of task work.

carried away the stones of Ramah, and the timber thereof, wherewith Baasha had builded; and king Asa built therewith Geba of Benjamin, and Mizpah. Now the rest of all the 23 acts of Asa, and all his might, and all that he did, and the cities which he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? But in the time of his old age he was diseased in his feet. And Asa slept with his 24 fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoshaphat his son reigned in his stead.

And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over 25

Geba] Cp. v. 17, note.

Mizpah] The site is on the modern *Nabi Samwil*, i.e. ' [hill] of the Prophet Samuel,' 2852 feet above the sea, the highest mountain near Jerusalem (Baedeker, *Palestine*, page 116). Mizpah was one of the haunts of Samuel (1 Sam. vii. 5, 16). Asa's work was to rebuild or fortify it. Cp. Jer. xli. 9.

25. *all his might*] Cp. 1 Chr. xiv. 9—15.

25—XVI. 20 (no parallel in Chron.). THE INSTABILITY OF THE NORTHERN DYNASTIES. THE REVOLUTIONARY POWER OF THE PROPHETS.

The prophets Ahijah (xl. 19 ff.) and Shemaiah (xii. 21 ff.) had given the impulse to the disruption of Israel and the establishment of the northern kingdom. They pronounced that the revolution by which these changes were accomplished was from JEHOVAH. Prophetic activity continued in the northern kingdom as long as the kingdom lasted. Jehu the prophet in addressing Baasha tells him that he owed his advancement to JEHOVAH (xvi. 2). The prophets are represented as agents of severest punishments, their predictions are sentences of death, they are warrants intrusted to revolutionary officers for the destruction of apostate kings and their families. When the successful conspirator becomes himself apostate, he is held guilty not only of apostasy, but also of the murder of his predecessor (xvi. 7). The prophets in short are represented as watching over the sin and the punishment of kings. Men like Baasha and Zimri carry out the Divine will, and in their turn suffer the Divine punishment for their own sins. The stern law of the Old Testament is seen actively enforced throughout the history of the northern kingdom.

25—32. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE HOUSE OF JEROBOAM.

In this paragraph the writer drops the thread of the history of Judah which he had followed for two reigns (vv. 1—24) and returns to the events of 40 years earlier in order to follow the story of the northern kingdom.

25. *Nadab*] LXX. *Naβάθ*, i.e. Nebat. This may possibly be right, for the name of the ancestor was sometimes passed on to the descendant.

Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and he
 26 reigned over Israel two years. And he did that which was
 evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his
 27 father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin. And
 Baasha the son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, con-
 spired against him; and Baasha smote him at Gibbethon,
 which belonged to the Philistines; for Nadab and all Israel
 28 were laying siege to Gibbethon. Even in the third year of
 Asa king of Judah did Baasha slay him, and reigned in his
 29 stead. And it came to pass that, as soon as he was king, he
 smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam
 any that breathed, until he had destroyed him; according
 unto the saying of the LORD, which he spake by the hand of
 30 his servant Ahijah the Shilonite: for the sins of Jeroboam
 which he sinned, and wherewith he made Israel to sin;
 because of his provocation wherewith he provoked the LORD,
 31 the God of Israel, to anger. Now the rest of the acts of
 Nadab, and all that he did, are they not written in the book
 32 of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And there was war
 between Asa and Baasha king of Israel all their days.

33 In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the
 son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, *and reigned*
 34 twenty and four years. And he did that which was evil in
 the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of Jeroboam,
 16 and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin. And the
 word of the LORD came to Jehu the son of Hanani against
 2 Baasha, saying, Forasmuch as I exalted thee out of the dust,

27. *of Issachar*] This description distinguishes Ahijah the father of
 Baasha from Ahijah the prophet, who was of Shiloh in Ephraim.

Gibbethon] Reckoned in Josh. xix. 44 among the cities of the
 southern Dan. It was besieged again by Israel in the reign of Elah
 the son of Baasha (xvi. 15).

33—XVI. 7. THE REIGN OF BAASHA.

The most important incident in the reign of Baasha, the attempted
 blockade of Jerusalem on the north, has already been told (*vv. 17—22*)
 in connexion with the history of Judah.

33. *Tirzah*] Cp. xiv. 17, note.

CII. XVI.

1. *Jehu the son of Hanani*] Cp. 2 Chr. xix. 2; xx. 34.

2. *out of the dust*] Nothing is told us in the narrative of Baasha's
 position before he became king, but these words imply that he was of
 lowly birth.

and made thee 'prince over my people Israel; and thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger with their sins; behold, 3 I will utterly sweep away Baasha and his house; and I will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs 4 eat; and him that dieth of his in the field shall the fowls of the air eat. Now the rest of the acts of Baasha, and what 5 he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Baasha slept 6 with his fathers, and was buried in Tirzah; and Elah his son reigned in his stead. And moreover by the hand of the 7 prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the LORD against Baasha, and against his house, both because of all the evil that he did in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger with the work of his hands, in being like the house of Jeroboam, and because he smote ^ahim.

In the twenty and sixth year of Asa king of Judah began 8 Elah the son of Baasha to reign over Israel in Tirzah, and reigned two years. And his servant Zimri, captain of half 9

¹ Or, leader

⁵ Or, it

prince] Cp. l. 35, note.

3. *behold, I will utterly sweep away &c.*] Cp. xiv. 10, 11, notes.

6. *Baasha slept with his fathers*] The end of Baasha himself, like that of Jeroboam (xiv. 20), was peaceful. A man is punished (according to ancient Semitic ideas) by the destruction of his posterity, though he escape punishment in his own person.

7. *And moreover &c.*] This verse repeats in different words a statement which has been made already in *vv.* 1-4; it is probably a gloss.

came the word of the LORD &c.] The word came with power against the house of Baasha that it might become like the house of Jeroboam. The translation of E.V., *in being like the house of J.*, gives no suitable sense, and is certainly wrong.

and because he smote him] A note added to the original text. The writer does not consider the conspiracy of Baasha to be less wicked because it happened to fulfil the prophet's denunciation of evil against Jeroboam and his house. Cp. Hos. i. 4, where it is said that the LORD will avenge the blood of Jezreel (i.e. the murder of Jezebel and her son Joram) on the house of Jehu.

8-14. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE HOUSE OF BAASHA.

8. *two years*] Reckoned inclusively, for Elah was slain in the twenty-seventh year of Asa.

his chariots, conspired against him: now he was in Tirzah, drinking himself drunk in the house of Arza, which was
 10 over the household in Tirzah: and Zimri went in and smote him, and killed him, in the twenty and seventh year of Asa
 11 king of Judah, and reigned in his stead. And it came to pass, when he began to reign, as soon as he sat on his throne, that he smote all the house of Baasha: he left him
 not a single man child, neither of his kinsfolks, nor of his
 12 friends. Thus did Zimri destroy all the house of Baasha, according to the word of the LORD, which he spake against
 13 Baasha by Jehu the prophet, for all the sins of Baasha, and the sins of Elah his son, which they sinned, and wherewith they made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD, the God of
 14 Israel, to anger with their vanities. Now the rest of the acts of Elah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

15 In the twenty and seventh year of Asa king of Judah did Zimri reign seven days in Tirzah. Now the people were encamped against Gibbethon, which belonged to the Philis-
 16 tines. And the people that were encamped heard say, Zimri hath conspired, and hath also smitten the king: wherefore all Israel made Omri, the captain of the host,

9. *Zimri*] No genealogy is attached to his name. Presumably he was of lowly birth. His deed was remembered (2 K. ix. 31).

drinking himself drunk] Cp. xx. 16 (same Heb. phrase).

11. *kinsfolks*] Near relations who might have avenged him. The Heb. word used is *gōl*. Cp. Lev. xxv. 15; Ruth ii. 20 (with R.V. marg.); also Deut. xix. 6, 'the avenger (*gōl*) of blood.'

13. *with their vanities*] Cp. v. 2, *with their sins*. The reference in both cases is the same, i.e. to the images (calves) set up by Jeroboam and maintained by his successors. The description *vanity* or *vanities*, i.e. unreal things, 'nothings,' is also applied to idols generally. Cp. 2 K. xvii. 15.

15—20. THE FATE OF ZIMRI.

15. *seven days*] LXX., 'seven years.' The Heb. word *yāmim* (lit. 'days') is sometimes used as a rough equivalent for 'year' (cp. xvii. 7, note), but *not* when it is immediately preceded by a numeral as in this passage. There is no room for a reign of *seven years* for Zimri between the twenty-seventh (v. 15) and the thirty-eighth year of Asa (v. 29), when Ahab began to reign.

Gibbethon] Cp. xv. 27.

16. *the captain of the host*] The last holder of this office whose name is preserved was Benaiah son of Jehoiada (iv. 4).

king over Israel that day in the camp. And Omri went up 17 from Gibbethon, and all Israel with him, and they besieged Tirzah. And it came to pass, when Zimri saw that the city 18 was taken, that he went into the ¹castle of the king's house, and burnt the king's house over him with fire, and died; for 19 his sins which he sinned in doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, to make Israel to sin. Now the 20 rest of the acts of Zimri, and his treason that he wrought, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

Then were the people of Israel divided into two parts: 21 half of the people followed Tibni the son of Ginath, to make

¹ Or, *palace*

17. *went up*] It is not said that it was necessary to patch up some agreement with the Philistines first, but this is what we should expect.

18. *castle*] The meaning of the word is not certain; perhaps 'castle, citadel' is the best rendering.

19. *for his sins &c.*] If Zimri reigned only for a few days (cp. v. 15) he cannot justly be condemned for not having abolished the calf-worship. Probably this verse is due to a scribe who repeated the substance of xv. 30; xvi. 2.

21—28. OMRI FOUNDS A NEW DYNASTY.

The small space devoted to the reign of Omri in the book of Kings is very significant, for politically Omri was an important person. From the Bible we learn that he was the first to found a stable dynasty in the northern kingdom, and that it was he who gave that kingdom its permanent capital. He is named on the Moabite stone as the oppressor of Moab 'for many days,' and on the Assyrian monuments long after his death the land of Israel is called after him 'the land of the house of Omri' (*Authority and Archaeology*, p. 95). In religious importance, however, Omri's reign was overshadowed by the reign of his son Ahab. Omri merely followed in the steps of Jeroboam and maintained the calf-worship, whereas Ahab under the influence of his Phœnician wife introduced the worship of Baal. This step brought him into direct conflict with the prophet Elijah, and it is owing to the religious and moral interest of the struggle which followed that so large a space (chs. xvii.—xxii.) is devoted to the reign of Ahab. Kings is not a chronicle of the kingdom so much as a book of the deeds and words by which the prophets strove to influence the kings. The reign of Omri has no hero, the heroes of the reign of Ahab are Elijah, Micaiah (xxii. 7—18), and the unnamed prophet (xx. 13, 14).

22 him king; and half followed Omri. But the people that followed Omri prevailed against the people that followed Tibni the son of Ginath: so Tibni died, and Omri reigned.
 23 In the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah began Omri to reign over Israel, and reigned twelve years: six
 24 years reigned he in Tirzah. And he bought the hill¹ Samaria of Shemer for two talents of silver; and he² built

¹ Heb. *Shomeron*

² Or, *fortified the hill*

22. *But the people &c.*] In LXX. v. 22 runs, 'And the people that followed Tibni son of Ginath were defeated, and Tibni died and his brother Joram at that time, and Zimri (mistake for "Omri")¹ reigned after Tibni.' It is probable that LXX. is right in the mention of Tibni's brother Joram.

so Tibni died, and Omri reigned. 23. *In the thirty &c.*] Read, so Tibni died, and Omri reigned alone (became sole king) in the thirty and first year of Asa king of Judah. Omri was made king first in the twenty-seventh year of Asa (v. 15, 16), so that the civil war lasted for four years. The division of verses at this point is misleading.

23. *began Omri to reign over Israel, and reigned twelve years*] Read, Omri reigned over Israel twelve years. The twelve years are by inclusive reckoning; Omri reigned from the twenty-seventh to the thirty-eighth year of Asa (v. 29).

24. *the hill*] Lit. *the mountain*. The hill on which the city is built is 1542 feet above the sea; it is isolated, and commands an extensive view towards the west as far as the Mediterranean. The city of Samaria is called in Isa. xxviii. 1 the 'crown of pride...on the head of the fat valley.' Judging by the sieges which it sustained it must have been a very strong place. Cp. xx. 1—21; 2 K. vi. 24—vii. 16; xvii. 5, 6. Cp. G. A. Smith, *Historical Geography*, pp. 346 ff.

Samaria] This is the Greek form of the name derived from LXX. *Samapela*, and found in the New Testament (John iv. 5; Acts viii. 5). Similar to it is *Shāmērayin*, the form found in the Aramaic parts of the Old Testament (Ezra iv. 17). In the Hebrew O.T., however, the name is always *Shōmērōn*, which is probably the older form. The name was not confined to the city; on the contrary this verse shews that there was a 'Mountain of Samaria' before there was a 'City of Samaria. This 'mountain' consists of the ridge of lofty hills (or low mountains) which form the continuation northwards of the Judæan ridge on which Jerusalem is built. It is sometimes called in the plural 'the mountains of Samaria' (Amos iii. 9). It is not surprising therefore to find that in several passages of Kings *Shōmērōn* is used as the designation of the northern kingdom as a whole (1 K. xiii. 32, 'cities of Samaria'; xviii. 2; 2 K. xvii. 24). In the New Testament (and probably even in Acts viii. 5) *Samaria* means the district which separated Judæa from Galilee.

¹ This mistake occurs every time Omri's name is mentioned, even in v. 16.

on the hill, and called the name of the city which he built, after the name of Shemer, the owner of the hill, ¹Samaria. And Omri did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, ²⁵ and dealt wickedly above all that were before him. For he ²⁶ walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sins wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger with their vanities. Now ²⁷ the rest of the acts of Omri which he did, and his might that he shewed, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? So Omri slept with his ²⁸ fathers, and was buried in Samaria: and Ahab his son reigned in his stead.

And in the thirty and eighth year of Asa king of Judah ²⁹ began Ahab the son of Omri to reign over Israel: and Ahab the son of Omri reigned over Israel in Samaria twenty and two years. And Ahab the son of Omri did that which was ³⁰ evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him ³¹

¹ Heb. *Shomeron*

built on the hill] Cp. xii. 25; xv. 22.

^{25.} *above all that were before him*] The following verse however describes him only as a whole-hearted follower of Jeroboam, and it is probable that the words here, are a misplaced echo from v. 30.

^{26.} *with their vanities*] Cp. v. 13, note.

^{27.} *his might*] Beside his part in civil war he had perhaps to fight (unsuccessfully) with the Syrians of Damascus (xx. 34). On the Moabite stone he is described as the conqueror of the land of Medeba and the oppressor of Moab. Cp. 2 K. iii. 4, note.

29—33. AHAB INTRODUCES THE WORSHIP OF THE ZIDONIAN BAAL INTO ISRAEL.

^{29.} *Ahab*] Just as the name *Shishak* (xi. 40, note) supplies us with the first certain chronological link between the history of Israel and that of Egypt, so the name *Ahab* brings the history of Israel for the first time into direct contact with the Assyrian Annals. From very early times the ambition of the Assyrian kings drove them to seek a dominant position on the east coast of the Mediterranean. The kings of Syria naturally opposed these designs, and Ahab as the ally or client of Ben-hadad of Damascus was drawn into the conflict. The name of the king of Israel appears accordingly on an inscription of Shalmaneser II of Assyria in the list of those who opposed the king of Assyria in the great battle of Karkar in 854 B.C. See further the introductory note to ch. xx.

to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife ¹Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him.
 32 And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal,

¹ Heb. *Isabel*

31. *Ethbaal*] Josephus, *Ithobalus*. Our knowledge of the history of Phœnicia during the days of the Israelite kings is quite fragmentary, but a list of the kings 'who reigned in Tyre' from Hiram (v. 1) to the foundation of Carthage is quoted from the lost General History of Menander the Ephesian by several later authorities, beginning with Josephus. Unfortunately the quotations are marred by corruptions of the text, and neither the names of the kings nor the length of their reigns can be recovered, as they were given by Menander. A certain *Ithobalus*, however, appears as the sixth king from Hiram according to Josephus (*c. Apionem*, § 18). The intervening reigns occupied 38 years, but *Ithobalus* is assigned 32 years. As recent schemes of Biblical chronology reckon about 60 years from the death of Solomon to the accession of Ahab (*Hastings' Dictionary*, vol. 1. page 401), the dates allow us to identify *Ethbaal* with *Ithobalus*. Menander tells us that he was priest of Astarte (Ashtoreth). He assassinated his predecessor, and built the cities of Botrys in Phœnicia and Auza in Libya (*Josephus, Antiq. VIII. § 324*).

of the Zidonians] *Ethbaal's* predecessor, Hiram, is called 'king of Tyre' (v. 1; ix. 11). Both titles are appropriate. The Phœnicians held several important cities, Tyre, Zidon, Gebal (Byblus, v. 18), Arvad (Ezek. xxvii. 8), but no comprehensive name ('Phœnicia' or 'the Phœnicians') occurs in the Old Testament. The state is called 'Tyre' and the people 'the Zidonians' (v. 6; xi. 5; Deut. iii. 9; Jud. x. 12). In 1 Chr. xxii. 4; Ezra iii. 7, 'the Zidonians and the Tyrians,' the fuller phrase is given, but it is open to the objection that it is not a complete description of the Phœnician people. Josephus (*Antiq. VIII. § 317*) speaks of *Ithobalus* as king of the Tyrians and Zidonians.

and served Baal] This does not necessarily mean that he gave up the worship of JEHOVAH. It was a case of unfaithfulness to the LORD as the One God of Israel, an attempt to combine the worship of JEHOVAH (under the form of the golden calf) with the worship of the Phœnician Baal. Ahab (like Solomon, xi. 6) 'went not fully after the LORD.' On the meaning of *Baal* see note on *the Baalim* (xviii. 18).

32. *in the house of Baal*] The reading of the Heb. text, *an altar for Baal in the house of Baal*, is tautological. LXX. gives, *in the house of idols*. Probably the original reading was, *in the house of God*, but the Hebrew scribes and the Greek translators alike felt a repugnance to use this title of a sanctuary which contained an altar of Baal. Ahab worshipped JEHOVAH and Baal in the same temple.

which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made the 33
 Asherah; and Ahab did yet more to provoke the LORD, the
 God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel that were
 before him. In his days did Hiel the Beth-elite build 34
 Jericho: he laid the foundation thereof with the loss of
 Abiram his firstborn, and set up the gates thereof with the
 loss of his youngest son Segub; according to the word of
 the LORD, which he spake by the hand of Joshua the son
 of Nun.

33. *the Asherah*] Well known in Samaria. Cp. xiv. 23, note.

34. THE BUILDING OF JERICO.

It is probable that this passage has no real connexion with Josh. vi. 26, to which the concluding words refer. The words as they stand are brief and obscure, but they seem to refer to a cruel and superstitious custom connected with the building of houses and cities, which still prevails in the darkest parts of Africa. A human victim is sacrificed and buried beneath the foundations, usually close to the entrance. That this practice was known in Canaan we have reason to believe, for the recent excavations at Gezer and at Taanach (*P. E. F. Quarterly Statement* for 1904, pages 16, 17; 391) revealed skeletons buried beneath the foundations. If this theory be correct, we should translate *with the sacrifice of Abiram (Segub) for with the loss of Abiram (Segub)*. The writer records the human sacrifices of this unnatural father as an illustration of the heathenish practices which prevailed under Ahab. A later writer, misunderstanding the concise expression of the Hebrew (*in Abiram...in Segub*; so also LXX.), added the later words of the verse which connect the incidents with the denunciation-uttered by Joshua.

XVII. 1—K. X. 31. THE PROPHETS OF JEHOVAH IN CONFLICT WITH THE ROYAL PATRONS OF BAAL.

This section of nearly sixteen chapters is the story of the struggle in the northern kingdom between the prophets of JEHOVAH and the patrons of Baal. The story is interrupted with Syrian wars and with personal incidents in the lives of the prophets, but the main theme is the fall of the house of Omri and of the foreign god. The struggle lasted for two generations; it began between Ahab and Elijah, it ended when Joram fell before the messenger of Elisha.

The two generations correspond generally with the two stages of the conflict. In the earlier stage hostilities were not pushed to extremities against the royal house; Elijah wished to convert Ahab. But for Jezebel he would have succeeded. Elijah in spite of the strength of his denunciations was far from being an irreconcilable enemy of Ahab; he

17 And Elijah the Tishbite, who was ¹ of the sojourners of

¹ According to the Sept., of *Tishbeh of Gilead*

ran before his chariot after the scene on Carmel (1 K. xviii. 46), and he marked with sympathy the tokens of the king's repentance for the murder of Naboth (1 K. xxi. 29).

The conflict in its second stage when Elisha stood face to face with Joram had become embittered by being prolonged. Elisha was a sterner opponent than Elijah. He was reluctant to help Joram even against such an enemy as Moab (2 K. iii. 14). He could call the king 'this son of a murderer' (2 K. vi. 32). Finally, he sent to anoint Jehu, though he could hardly have supposed otherwise than that by so doing he doomed Joram to death (2 K. ix. 1-3).

But the bitterness of the conflict in its second stage was marked further by the fact that Elisha stirred up not only Jehu, the domestic foe of the royal house, but also the Syrian Hazael (2 K. viii. 7-15). Ben-hadad's martial spirit had been quenched by the great failure to capture Samaria recorded in 2 K. vii. 3-16, and Joram's throne had been made proportionately more secure. But the prosperity of Joram meant the triumph of Baal-worship, and Elisha felt himself driven to adopt a desperate plan. Joram was first to be weakened by a renewed attack from Syria, and then overthrown by domestic revolution. The execution of a similar plan had been laid upon Elijah (1 K. xix. 15-17) but the older prophet had shrunk from setting such machinery to work against Ahab himself (cp. 1 K. xxi. 29), though he perhaps communicated his plan to Elisha for execution on some future day against the royal house.

As to its immediate result the scheme was completely successful. 'Jehu destroyed Baal out of Israel' (2 K. x. 28). But the price paid was high. 'Evil deed hath evil seed,' even when it is done with high motive. Hazael was the scourge of Israel for a whole generation (2 K. x. 32; xiii. 3). When at last the Syrians fell back before the blows dealt them by Joash and Jeroboam II, the kingdom of Israel was already ripe for its fall.

CH. XVII. 1-7. THE APPEARANCE OF ELIJAH THE PROPHET.

1. *Elijah the Tishbite*] The abruptness with which this great prophet is introduced has given rise to the supposition that some further particulars of his origin were given in the document from which this passage is taken. But such speculations are vain. Elijah was only a private person (cp. Amos vii. 14, 15) until the growth of Baal-worship under royal patronage forced him to prophesy. He does not make his appearance as *Elijah the prophet*, but as *Elijah the Tishbite*. He is called 'the Tishbite' also in xxi. 17, 28; 2 K. i. 3, 8. He receives the title of 'the prophet' in xviii. 36; 2 Chr. xxi. 19; Mal. iv. 5. His most usual designation however is simply 'Elijah.' In xviii. 22 he claims for himself the office of a prophet of YEHOWAH, and in 2 K. i. 9, 11, 13 he is addressed in the words, 'O Man of God.' But since prophets are

Gilead, said unto Ahab, As the LORD, the God of Israel, liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word. And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And it shall be, that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there. So he went and did according unto the word of the LORD: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook. And it came to pass after a

numbered by hundreds in the book of Kings, the greatest of them is best described by his simple name, 'Elijah.' The name is significant; it means, 'JEHOVAH is my God.'

who was of the sojourners of Gilead] If the reading of the Heb. text is right, Elijah was only a sojourner in Gilead, not a native of the country. But LXX. gives, *of Thisbae (Thisbe)*. This Thisbe is described as *of Gilead* in order to distinguish it from its northern namesake in Galilee (Tobit i. 2).

As the LORD...liveth] This is the form of oath laid down in the Law. See Deut. vi. 13; Jer. iv. 2.

before whom I stand] Cp. x. 8, note.

there shall not be dew nor rain] Menander (apud Joseph. *Antiq.* viii. § 324) mentions a prolonged drought under Ithobalus of Tyre.

3. by the brook Cherith] Cp. xv. 13. 'Brook' is an inadequate rendering of the Heb. *nahal* (= Arab. *wadi*); 'ravine,' as in John xviii. 1, marg., would be much better; such a ravine usually forms the bed of a winter torrent. A *nahal* is a place in which a man, or indeed a band of men, might hide; such a 'brook' is a formidable natural obstacle (1 Sam. xxx. 10). Thus the sides of the *Wadi Kilt* (near Jericho) with which the *brook Cherith* has been identified (wrongly however) consist of cliffs a hundred or two hundred feet high. The exact position of the *nahal Cherith* is unknown; it was *before Jordan*, i.e. east of the river.

4. the ravens] So LXX. τοῖς κρῶσις. Cp. Prov. xxx. 17 'the ravens of the *nahal*'; also Ps. cxlvii. 9. The translation *ravens* is not unsuitable; ravens were well-known inhabitants of ravines, and they were regarded as fed by God. On the other hand *ravens* are unclean (Deut. xiv. 14) and therefore unfitted to carry food for human beings. Moreover the Heb. word 'ārḇīm, pointed differently ('arḇīm), yields the sense of 'dwellers in the steppes' or 'Arabs.' It may be that the simple desert-dwellers were the prophet's providers.

6. bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening] LXX., 'bread in the morning and flesh in the evening.'

while, that the brook dried up, because there was no rain in the land.

8 And the word of the LORD came unto him, saying,
 9 Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon,
 and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow
 10 woman there to sustain thee. So he arose and went to
 Zarephath; and when he came to the gate of the city,
 behold, a widow woman was there gathering sticks: and he
 called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water
 11 in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to
 fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a
 12 morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said, As the LORD
 thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal
 in the barrel, and a little oil in the cruse: and, behold, I am
 gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me
 13 and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elijah said
 unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make
 me thereof a little cake first, and bring it forth unto me, and
 14 afterward make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the
 LORD, the God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste,
 neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the LORD
 15 sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did ac-
 cording to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her

7. *after a while*] Lit. *after days* (Heb. *yāmim*). Cp. v. 15, '*she did eat many days*,' (Heb. simply *yāmim* 'days'). The Heb. expression 'days' means in some contexts (and perhaps in this place) 'a year'; 1 Sam. i. 3 'from days to days' ('from year to year,' R.V.); 1 Sam. xxvii. 7 'days and four months' ('a full year and four months,' E.V.).

8—16. ELIJAH SUSTAINED AT ZAREPHATH.

9. *Zarephath*] LXX. (=Luke iv. 26) *Σαρπυρα*, modern Arab. *Sarfenā*. The city (now a village) is situated on the sea between Tyre on the south and Zidon on the north, but nearer to Zidon.

12. *a cake*] i.e. of bread. Bread is baked in the East in circular flat cakes.

the cruse] Cp. xiv. 3; xix. 6; 2 K. ii. 20. This word, found only in Samuel and Kings, was perhaps becoming obsolete in 1611, the date of A.V. In Coverdale's Bible, Exod. xvi. 33 reads, *Take a cruse* (A.V. *pot*). The German *Krug* is a 'pot, jug' or 'pitcher.'

14. *waste*] i.e. 'be spent.'

house, did eat *many days*. The barrel of meal wasted not, 16
 neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the
 LORD, which he spake by Elijah. And it came to pass 17
 after these things, that the son of the woman, the mistress
 of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that
 there was no breath left in him. And she said unto Elijah, 18
 What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? ¹thou
 art come unto me to bring my sin to remembrance, and to
 slay my son! And he said unto her, Give me thy son. 19
 And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into
 the chamber, where he abode, and laid him upon his own
 bed. And he cried unto the LORD, and said, O LORD my 20
 God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with
 whom I sojourn, by slaying her son? And he stretched 21
 himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the
 LORD, and said, O LORD my God, I pray thee, let this
 child's soul come into him again. And the LORD hearkened 22
 unto the voice of Elijah; and the soul of the child came
 into him again, and he revived. And Elijah took the child, 23
 and brought him down out of the chamber into the house,
 and delivered him unto his mother: and Elijah said, See,
 thy son liveth. And the woman said to Elijah, Now I know 24

¹ Or, *art thou &c.*

15. *many days*]. Heb. *yāmim* 'days' i.e. perhaps 'a year.' Cp.
 v. 7, note.

17—24. THE RAISING OF THE WIDOW'S SON.

18. *What have I to do with thee*] LXX. (rendering the Hebrew
 literally), *τί ἐποὶ καὶ σοί*; Cp. John ii. 4. It is in fact a request to the
 prophet to depart. Cp. Luke iv. 34.

to bring my sin to remembrance] i.e. before God, so that God has
 sent a punishment for it. The expression 'my sin' does not imply
 that the widow was a pre-eminent sinner. Cp. St Peter's cry 'Depart
 from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord' (Luke v. 8).

20. *Hast thou also brought evil*] The stress is wrongly given in the
 E.V. The Hebrew is, '*Also upon the widow with whom I sojourn hast
 thou brought evil?*' Evil has come upon the whole land of Israel, but
 the widow with her unfailing barrel and cruse had escaped, but now...?

21. *he stretched himself*] Cp. 2 K. iv. 34.

22. *And the LORD hearkened &c.*] LXX. for this verse has simply,
 'and so it came to pass, and the child cried out.' This was perhaps
 the original reading of the Hebrew text.

that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in thy mouth is truth.

- 18 And it came to pass after many days, that the word of the LORD came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth.
 2 And Elijah went to shew himself unto Ahab. And the
 3 famine was sore in Samaria. And Ahab called Obadiah, which was over the household. (Now Obadiah feared the
 4 LORD greatly: for it was so, when Jezebel cut off the prophets of the LORD, that Obadiah took an hundred prophets, and hid them by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and
 5 water.) And Ahab said unto Obadiah, Go through the land, unto all the fountains of water, and unto all the brooks:

24. *in thy mouth is truth*] i.e. comes to pass.

CII. XVIII. 1—15. THE MEETING OF ELIJAH WITH OBADIAH.

Elijah made himself felt as much by his absence as by his presence, as much by his disappearances as by his courageous rebukes. When the severity of the famine was experienced in Israel, Ahab sought far and wide for the prophet who had announced it. In the third year after a long period of hiding Elijah shewed himself to the king. He avoided however the risk of an unprepared meeting with the enraged king. He had a message which he must deliver, and so he first announced his coming through Obadiah. He thus secured the initiative to himself, and kept it until the prophets of Baal were destroyed.

1. *Go, shew thyself unto Ahab*] Since Ahab had been told by Elijah that the famine was sent by JEHOVAH, it was necessary that he should know on the same authority that the removal of it was also due to JEHOVAH.

2. *sore in Samaria*] In the northern kingdom, not merely in the city of Samaria. Cp. note on xvi. 24.

3. *Obadiah feared the LORD greatly*] He was a strict worshipper of JEHOVAH; he was not like Ahab (xvi. 31, note), who divided his worship between JEHOVAH and Baal. The name Obadiah ('Servant of JEHOVAH') was probably conferred on him, or assumed by him, because of this fact.

4. *cut off*] The word suggests an attempt to exterminate the prophets. What is here described as the work of Jezebel is described in xix. 10 as done by the children of Israel themselves. Jezebel probably made the people her accomplices, as in the case of Naboth (xxi. 9—14).

with bread and water] See xiii. 19, note.

5. *the brooks*] LXX. χειμάρρους. See xvii. 3, note.

peradventure we may find grass and save the horses and mules alive, ¹that we lose not all the beasts. So they 6 divided the land between them to pass throughout it: Ahab went one way by himself, and Obadiah went another way by himself. And as Obadiah was in the way, behold, Elijah 7 met him: and he knew him, and fell on his face, and said, Is it thou, my lord Elijah? And he answered him, It is I: 8 go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*. And he said, 9 Wherein have I sinned, that thou wouldest deliver thy servant into the hand of Ahab, to slay me? As the LORD 10 thy God liveth, there is no nation or kingdom, whither my lord hath not sent to seek thee: and when they said, He is not here, he took an oath of the kingdom and nation, that they found thee not. And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy 11 lord, Behold, Elijah *is here*. And it shall come to pass, as 12 soon as I am gone from thee, that the spirit of the LORD shall carry thee whither I know not; and so when I come and tell Ahab, and he cannot find thee, he shall slay me: but I thy servant fear the LORD from my youth. Was it not 13 told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the LORD, how I hid an hundred men of the LORD's

¹ Or, and lose none of

horses and mules] The king thinks first of the *horses*, because they were imported at a price for warlike use, and of the *mules* because they were used for purposes of kingly state (i. 33; 2 Sam. xiii. 29; xviii. 9).

that we lose not all the beasts] Neither this translation nor that of the margin is satisfactory. A less definite rendering is better, *that we lose not the beasts*. It is however possible that the Heb. text is faulty; LXX. has, *and they will not be destroyed from their byres*.

7. *he knew him*] Better, *recognised him*. Elijah had been in hiding for two years, but Obadiah as a servant of JEHOVAH recognises JEHOVAH's prophet.

8. *tell thy lord*] Elijah has read Ahab's impulsive character. If the prophet had presented himself unannounced before the king, he would have been slain out of hand.

10. *no nation or kingdom*] Obadiah uses a figure of speech, but doubtless Ahab had enquired after Elijah in Judah, in Edom, in Moab, among the cities of the Philistines, and among the Phœnician cities.

12. *the spirit of the LORD shall carry thee*] Cp. Acts viii. 39. The words do not necessarily imply a miraculous disappearance of Elijah.

prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and
 14 water? And now thou sayest, Go, tell thy lord, Behold,
 15 *Elijah is here*: and he shall slay me. And Elijah said, As
 the LORD of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, I will surely
 16 shew myself unto him to-day. So Obadiah went to meet
 17 Ahab, and told him: and Ahab went to meet Elijah. And
 it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto
 18 him, Is it thou, thou troubler of Israel? And he answered,
 I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house,
 in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD,
 19 and thou hast followed the Baalim. Now therefore send,

16—19. THE MEETING OF ELIJAH WITH AHAB.

17. *troubler of Israel*] The same Heb. word is used of Achan (Achar) in Josh. vii. 25; 1 Chr. ii. 7. Achan brought a great calamity (defeat) upon Israel through an offence against JEHOVAH; it is possible that Ahab considered that Elijah brought the calamity of drought upon Israel through some offence against Baal.

18. *and thy father's house*] Ahab's kindred joined in his Baal-worship.

the Baalim] The form is plural; it is more usual to speak of the Baal (singular). Cp. vv. 19, 22, 26, &c. It is not known precisely what god or gods are referred to in different parts of the Old Testament under the title of *the Baal* ('the Lord') or *the Baalim* ('the Lords'). At one time the title was given to JEHOVAH Himself. Cp. Hos. ii. 16 and the note on 1 Chr. viii. 33 in the *Camb. Bible*. On the other hand it was given to Molech (Jer. xxxii. 35), and also to the chief god worshipped at Tyre (1 K. xvi. 31). This Tyrian Baal was identified by the Greeks with Heracles (Hercules) and taken to be the Sun-god. On the other hand, as Robertson Smith (*Religion of the Semites*, pp. 100—107) points out, the Baalim are regarded in Hos. ii. 5, 8, 12 as gods of fertility, and fertility to the Eastern mind is dependent rather on water than on the sun. Further as many place-names are compounded with Baal, such as Baal-Zephon (Exod. xiv. 2, 9), Baal-Hermon (Jud. iii. 3), &c., it seems that the Baal was often regarded as a *local* deity, and not as a Sun-god. Certain names such as Baal-peor (Num. xxv. 3, 5), 'lord of the opening,' and Baal-perazim (2 Sam. v. 20 *q.v.*), 'lord of the breakings,' suggest that the Baal in these cases was the god of a special fountain or of a group of springs. Probably therefore when the plural term *Baalim* is used, the reference is to Canaanite nature worship generally, not excluding the Tyrian worship of the Sun-god. In the singular the term *the Baal* may denote the chief god of the Tyrians, or some local Baal (cp. Jud. vi. 25) according to the context.

and gather to me all Israel unto mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the Asherah four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table. So Ahab sent unto all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together unto mount Carmel. And Elijah came near unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word. Then said Elijah unto the people, I, even I only, am left a

19. *mount Carmel*] 'In its separation from other hills, its position on the sea, its visibleness from all quarters of the country; in its uselessness for war or traffic; in its profusion of flowers, its high platforms and groves with their glorious prospects of land and sea, Carmel must have been a place of retreat and of worship from the earliest times. It was claimed for Baal; but even before Elijah's day, an altar had stood upon it for JEHOVAH. About this altar—as on a spot whose sanctity they equally felt—the rival faiths met in that contest, in which for most of us all the history of Carmel consists.' (G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*, ed. 3, p. 340.)

and the prophets of the Asherah (of Asherah) four hundred] The word *Asherah* which more commonly denotes the symbol of a goddess (xiv. 23); denotes here, as in xv. 13, the goddess herself. As to this last fact there was for a considerable time grave doubt, and the correctness of the text of xv. 13 and xviii. 19 was called in question. The excavations however carried on by Dr Sellin at Ta'anak (Taanach, iv. 12) have shewn that a goddess whose name is written *Ashirat* (= *Asherah*) was worshipped in very early times in Palestine. *Ashirat* was identified among the Assyrians and Babylonians with *Ishtar*, who was in one aspect the Mother-goddess, who helped women in travail. It is probable that Asherah was regarded as the consort of the Baal.

20—40. THE CONTEST ON MOUNT CARMEL.

21. *How long halt ye between two opinions?*] Rather, **How long go ye halting, being of a double mind?** 'Halt' is here used as in Gen. xxxii. 31; Ps. xxxviii. 17 in the sense of 'to limp.' In v. 26 the same Heb. word is rendered 'leaped' (marg. 'limped'). *Being of a double mind* is literally, *On the two diverse opinions.*

answered him not a word] Elijah's words were in no sense a popular appeal. The worship of local Baals had long prevailed in Israel, and when Jezebel introduced the cult of the Tyrian Baal, she merely extended a system already dear to the mass of the people. The prophet spoke to an unsympathetic, perhaps a hostile, audience.

22. *I, even I only*] The words are only true in the sense that Elijah was the only prophet who dared to stand up in the cause of JEHOVAH, and challenge the worshippers of Baal. Cp. xix. 10. Obadiah had preserved a hundred prophets of JEHOVAH (v. 4).

prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred
 23 and fifty men. Let them therefore give us two bullocks;
 and let them choose one bullock for themselves, and cut it
 in pieces, and lay it on the wood, and put no fire under: and
 I will dress the other bullock, and lay it on the wood, and
 24 put no fire under. And call ye on the name of your god,
 and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that
 answereth by fire, let him be God. And all the people
 25 answered and said, It is well spoken. And Elijah said unto
 the prophets of Baal, Choose you one bullock for yourselves,
 and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of
 26 your god, but put no fire under. And they took the bullock
 which was given them, and they dressed it, and called on the
 name of Baal from morning even until noon, saying, O Baal,
¹hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered.
 27 And they ²leaped about the altar which was made. And it
 came to pass at noon, that Elijah mocked them, and said,

¹ Or, answer

² Or, limped

four hundred and fifty men] LXX. adds, *and the prophets of the grove (Asherah) four hundred.* It may be that the Greek version preserves the original text.

24. *your god*] A.V. *your gods*; so LXX. The Heb. *Elōhim* is plural in form, and sometimes plural in meaning. More usually however it is used of *one* god, either of JEHOVAH, or (as here) of some particular foreign deity.

answereth by fire] Cp. Gen. iv. 4, 'The LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering' rendered by the ancient Greek translator, Theodotion, 'The LORD kindled fire (*ἐκένδησε*) over Abel and over his offering.' Cp. also Jud. vi. 21.

25. *are many*] Better as Heb., *are the many*. The party of Baal is the party of the many; the party of JEHOVAH is the party of the one, Elijah himself.

26. *dressed it*] i.e. cut it in pieces, and arranged the suitable portions in order upon the wood.

hear us] Better as marg., *answer us*, i.e. by a sign.

they leaped (marg. limped) about the altar] The Heb. word (*passāh*, 'limp') describes a slow dance performed to accompany a prayer of special intreaty; it is not used elsewhere in the Old Testament of a religious rite. Probably the dance was not unlike that of the modern Cairene dervishes. Joyful dancing as an element of worship is designated by different words: Exod. xxxii. 6 (*shāhēk* = 'play, sport'); Jud. xxi. 19—21 (*mēhōlōth* = 'choruses'); 2 Sam. vi. 14 (*mēharkēr* = 'dancing, whirling round').

Cry aloud: for he is a god; either he is musing, or he is gone aside, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked. And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with ¹knives and lances, till the blood gushed out upon them. And it was so, when midday was past, that they prophesied until the time of the offering of the evening oblation; but there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any ²that regarded. And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me; and all the people

¹ Or, *swords*

² Heb. *attention*

27. *musings*] Cp. Gen. xxiv. 63 'to meditate' (same Heb. word). A.V. *he is talking*; LXX. *he is talking in company*.

he is gone aside] i.e. *he is out of the way for the moment*. But the Heb. phrase is found here only in the Old Testament, and the meaning is not certain. Symmachus, *he is engaged in business*.

28. *they...cut themselves...till the blood gushed out upon them*] In Deut. xiv. 1 the Israelites are forbidden to cut themselves, but the practice there referred to was a custom of mourning only, the blood being offered to the *manes* of the deceased person. 'At the feast of the Syrian goddess at Mabbog [on the upper Euphrates], the Galli and devotees made gashes in their arms' (Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, ed. 2, page 321). If, as Dr Smith maintained, the ordinary Syriac word *ethkashsheph*, 'make supplication,' means literally 'cut oneself,' such accompaniments of fervent prayer cannot have been uncommon in Syria. Indeed the writer of Kings says that what the priests of Baal did, they did *after their manner*.

knives] The Heb. word is the usual word for *swords*. Possibly however special ritual knives, perhaps of flint, are meant. Circumcision was performed by preference with such a knife: Exod. iv. 25; Josh. v. 2.

lances] The Heb. word is translated *spear* in Jud. v. 8; 1 Chr. xii. 8. A.V. gives *lancets* in modern editions, but this is a corruption of *lancers*, which is found in editions published before 1762. *Lancers* is the Old English form of *lances* (F. H. Scrivener, Introduction to the Cambridge Paragraph Bible, pages xlvi, xvii).

29. *until the time of the offering of the evening oblation*] Cp. Exod. xxxix. 39.

In LXX. and Pesh. v. 29 appears in a different form, *And they prophesied until the afternoon (ῥὸ δεῖλιον) was past. And it came to pass, when the time of offering the sacrifice was come, Elijah spake to the prophets of the abominations (i.e. idols), saying, Retire ye now, and I will offer my burnt offering, and they retired and departed*. Josephus (*Antiq.* VIII. § 340) follows this reading, but it is certainly inferior to the Hebrew text.

30. *Come near unto me*] He bade them draw near, says Josephus, and observe him, lest he should secretly set the wood on fire,

came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the
 31 LORD that was thrown down. And Elijah took twelve stones,
 according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob,
 unto whom the word of the LORD came, saying, Israel shall
 32 be thy name. And with the stones he built an altar in the
 name of the LORD; and he made a trench about the altar,
 33 as great as would contain ¹two measures of seed. And he
 put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and
 laid it on the wood. And he said, Fill four barrels with
 water, and pour it on the burnt offering, and on the wood.
 34 And he said, Do it the second time; and they did it the
 second time. And he said, Do it the third time; and they
 35 did it the third time. And the water ran round about the
 36 altar; and he filled the trench also with water. And it came
 to pass at the time of the offering of the evening oblation,
 that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, O LORD, the
 God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known
 this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy

¹ Or, a two-seah measure

thrown down] Cp. xix. 10, 14. Apparently there had been a sanctuary
 (high place) to JEHOVAH on Carmel.

31. *twelve stones, &c.*] Elijah is here represented as reckoning the
 two tribes of the southern kingdom, Judah and Benjamin, among the
 tribes of Israel. There is nothing improbable in this representation;
 Judah was, it seems, under a suzerainty of some kind to Israel.
 Cp. xxii. 2—4. Some critics suppose that vv. 31, 32a are a later
 addition to the narrative: they regard v. 30b as the account of the
 repairing of an old altar, and vv. 31, 32a as the account of the building
 of a new one. In LXX. v. 30b follows v. 32a.

Israel shall be thy name] Gen. xxxii. 28; xxxv. 10.

32. *two measures*] The Heb. word is *śāh*, the name of a measure
 containing about 10½ quarts. LXX. gives *μερμηρη* (about 9 gallons),
 which corresponds rather with the Heb. *ēphah*, of which the *śāh* is
 the third part. The measure was used in our Lord's time. Cp. Matt.
 xiii. 33, *ἀλεβρου σάρα τρεῖς*, i.e. *three seahs* of wheat. The words of *seed*
 are added because the *śāh* was properly a dry measure.

33. *Fill four barrels with water*] In spite of the long drought
 there was water to be had on Carmel. 'Sweeping seawards, Carmel
 is the first of Israel's hills to meet the rains, and they give him of their
 best. He is clothed in verdure.' (G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*,
 p. 339.)

36. *at the time of the offering of the evening oblation*] Cp. v. 29.
Abraham... Isaac... Israel] Cp. Exod. xxxii. 13; 1 Chr. xxix. 18.

servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know 37 that thou, LORD, art God, ¹and *that* thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and 38 consumed the burnt offering, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and 39 they said, The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God. And 40 Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there. And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and 41 drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain. So 42 Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to

¹ Or, *for thou didst turn their heart backward*

37. *Hear me*] Rather, *Answer me*.

that thou, Jehovah, art God] Cp. v. 21, 'If the LORD (Heb. JEHOVAH) be God, follow him.' In both verses the Heb. has the article, 'the God' i.e. the true God of Israel. In v. 27 the article is missing.

and that thou hast turned their heart back again] Better as marg., *for thou didst turn their heart backward*. Elijah appeals to JEHOVAH as the God in whose hands is the heart of Israel. The Prophet prays that as God before turned the heart of Israel away from Himself, so now he would incline it once more towards Himself. There is nothing in the book of Kings to shew that the problem of free will had been seriously faced at this time. Cp. Isa. lxiii. 17.

38. *the fire of the LORD*] Cp. 2 K. i. 12; Num. xi. 1, 3; Job i. 16.

39. *God*] Cp. v. 37, note.

40. *Take the prophets of Baal*] Elijah acts in accordance with the *lex talionis*; the prophets of Baal are to suffer in expiation for the slaughter of the prophets of JEHOVAH. Cp. v. 4.

the brook Kishon] The upper reaches contain no water in summer, but the stream is perennial lower down. 'Brook'=Heb. *nahal*. See xvii. 3, note.

41—42. THE END OF THE DROUGHT.

41. *Get thee up*] i.e. to the place of sacrifice from which they had descended. The sacrificed bullocks would be the chief part of the feast.

the sound] Rain in Palestine is brought by westerly and south-westerly winds; Elijah hears the faint stirring of the west wind.

42. *And Elijah went up*] The king went up to feast, the prophet to pray.

the top of Carmel; and he bowed himself down upon the
 43 earth, and put his face between his knees. And he said to
 his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went
 up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said,
 44 Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh
 time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a cloud out of the
 sea, as small as a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say
 unto Ahab, 'Make ready thy chariot, and get thee down,
 45 that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in a little
 while, that the heaven grew black with clouds and wind,
 and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to
 46 Jezreel. And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah; and he
 girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of
 Jezreel.

¹ Or, Yoke

the top of Carmel] 'Most mountains of this height (1800 feet above sea level) have stately heads. But Carmel displays only a straight back which has breadth as well as length' (Sir Richard Temple, *Palestine Illustrated*, p. 228). The *top* (literally *head*) of Carmel probably means the seaward end, the 'headland,' the mountain being compared to a prone figure of a man having his head towards the west. Ahab was 'eating and drinking' on one of the 'high platforms' mentioned by Dr G. A. Smith. Cp. note on v. 19.

44. *a cloud out of the sea*] Cp. Luke xii. 54.

45. *Jezreel*] The modern *Zer'in*, with which *Jezreel* is commonly identified, is 16 miles distant as the crow flies from *el-Muhraka*, the traditional site of the events narrated in this chapter. *Jezreel* (*Zer'in*) stands on a spur of the Gilboa mountains (*Jebel Faku'a*) on the watershed, looking to the south-east down the valley of Jezreel to Beth-shan and the Jordan and westward over the 'great plain' of Jezreel towards Carmel. (Baedeker, *Palestine*, p. 242.) The strategical importance of the city was great; Ahab had a palace there (xxi. 1), and thither Ahab's son Joram retired to be healed of his wounds and to keep watch over the movements of the Syrians (2 K. viii. 29).

46. *was on Elijah*] Better, *came upon Elijah*. Elijah in a Divine ecstasy is able to keep up with the royal chariot in its headlong progress to the shelter of Jezreel.

ran before Ahab] As one of the king's attendants. Cp. 1 Sam. viii. 11. After the honour of JEHOVAH had been vindicated, Elijah was ready to honour the king.

CH. XIX. 1—21. ELIJAH SAVED FROM HIS DESPAIR.

This chapter, like the preceding, marks a crisis in the history of the struggle between the worship of JEHOVAH and the worship of Baal.

And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and 10
withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.
Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let 2
the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as
the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time. 1 And 3
when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came
to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant
there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilder- 4
ness, and came and sat down under a 2 juniper tree: and he

¹ According to some ancient authorities, *And he was afraid, and arose.*

² Or, *broom*

From a modern standpoint we see a grave moral difficulty in the commands given in xix. 15, 16 no less than in the event narrated in xviii. 40. Elijah is bidden to give Syria a determined enemy of Israel as king, and to stir up Jehu the usurper against Israel's king.

But the principle underlying all is the axiom of the Old Testament that apostasy deserves punishment in this world, and that prophets are agents used by God in the infliction of punishment. In the words of Jeremiah a prophet was appointed over a nation 'to pluck up and to break down, and to destroy and to overthrow; to build and to plant' (Jer. i. 10). If the powerful house of Omri was to be punished, such means as Elijah was bidden to use had necessarily to be employed.

1—8. THE FLIGHT OF ELIJAH TO HOREB.

² *sent a messenger*] Her object of course was to put the prophet to flight; to put him to death at the moment of his triumph was out of the question.

saying] LXX. has here a clause which is not found in the Hebrew: *If thou art Elijah, I am Jezebel.* It is possibly genuine.

So let the gods do to me] When a person invokes curses against himself, he confines himself to the vague expression, *so*, in order to avoid the danger of using words of ill-omen.

³ *And when he saw that, he arose*] Better as marg., *And he was afraid, and arose.* So LXX. Pesh. Vulg. The Heb. consonantal text is ambiguous; the R.V. text follows the Massoretic vowel points.

to Beer-sheba] This was reckoned the furthest city of Judah to the south. Cp. note on iv. 25.

his servant] Pesh. *his disciple*, a rendering which is substantially correct. At a later time Elisha stood in this double relation to Elijah. Cp. 2 K. iii. 11.

⁴ *into the wilderness*] He did not feel safe in Judah, for Judah under Jehoshaphat was closely bound to Israel; perhaps indeed we must look upon Ahab as Jehoshaphat's suzerain. Cp. xxii. 2—4.

a juniper tree] Better (cp. marg.) a single (lonely) bush of broom. Heb. *rōthem*, Arab. *retem*, the largest and most conspicuous

requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And he lay down and slept under a juniper tree; and, behold, an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was at his head a cake baken on the ¹coals, and a cruse of water. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again. And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God. And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there;

¹ Or, *hot stones*

shrub in the deserts south of Palestine. 'During the day when [our Arabs] often went on in advance of the camels, we found them not unfrequently sitting or sleeping under a bush of Retem to protect them from the sun' (Robinson, *Biblical Researches*, quoted in *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, s.v. JUNIPER). The phrase, *a single bush of broom* marks the desolation of the wilderness. Cp. Matt. xxi. 19 *ὄκνην μίαν*, 'a lonely fig tree,' i.e. one standing by itself.

I am not better than my fathers] These words may contain an allusion to a Divine promise (not preserved in our book of Kings) to the effect that Elijah should not die the common death of men. Cp. 2 K. ii. 1—11.

5. *Arise and eat*] The Divine answer to the prophet's prayer, 'Take away my life.' Elijah is bidden live and complete his work. Cp. *vv.* 15, 16.

6. *a cake baken on the coals*] Bread is made in Palestine in flat 'cakes.' When no oven is to be had, and haste is required, stones ('coals') are made hot in a fire, and these 'cakes' are baked in a very few minutes upon them.

7. *the angel (messenger) of the LORD*] In *v.* 5 simply *an angel* (or *a messenger*). There is nothing to shew whether the visitant was human or angelic.

8. *in the strength of that meat*] It is not said that Elijah fasted for the forty days, but the most that he could expect in crossing the desert of Sinai would be a little milk from some Bedōin encampment, or a handful of dates from an oasis, or a little wild honey.

forty days] The distance from Beer-sheba to Jebel Musa (Horeb) is about 170 miles as the crow flies. Once in the desert, Elijah did not hasten his steps; he came to the mountain in the course of his wanderings. His first object was to be in hiding.

Horeb the mount of God] *Horeb* and *Sinai* are two names of the

and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, **10** I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount **11** before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD **12** was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire ¹a still small voice. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he **13**

¹ Heb. *a sound of gentle stillness*

same mountain, the former being used in Exod. iii. 1; Dent. v. 3, *al.*, the latter in Exod. xix. 1, 2, 11, 18, 20, 23; xxxiv. 2, *al.* Here Moses had his first vision of JEHOVAH, and here the Law was given. Horeb (Sinai) is traditionally identified with *Jebel Musa* ('the mount of Moses') in the southern extremity of the Sinai peninsula, but some scholars on the strength of Deut. xxxiii. 2; Jud. v. 4, 5 suppose that it lay further to the north within the land of Edom.

9—13. THE WORD OF THE LORD TO ELIJAH.

9. *the word of the LORD*] How the word came is not said here; perhaps in vision; cp. v. 5.

10. *I have been very jealous*] 'Jealous' is used in the sense of 'zealous.' Cp. Zech. i. 14.

thrown down thine altars] The Prophet overlooks the faithful remnant of Israel. Cp. v. 18.

11, 12. *And he said*] All that follows in these verses constitutes the LORD's answer to Elijah's complaint. The verbal forms are not past tenses, but present participles, which are used by a common Heb. idiom to describe events which are in the immediate future. Translate accordingly, *will pass by* (LXX. *παρελεύσεται*)...*a wind will rend* (LXX. *πνεῦμα διαλθῶν*)...*will break* (LXX. *συντρίβῶν*)...*but the LORD is not.*

12. *and after the fire a still small voice*] Better, *and after the fire shall come a sound of gentle stillness.* The storm shall end in calm. The LORD makes answer by parable. He knows all that Elijah tells Him of Israel's violence and apostasy, and He is preparing punishment for the guilty nation. The LORD will sit in judgment, and 'the mountains' (the strong leaders) of Israel will be broken in pieces in the avenging storm. But the LORD knows more than the prophet; He has not overlooked the

wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?
 14 And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek
 15 my life, to take it away. And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way ¹to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, thou shalt anoint Hazael to be king
 16 over Syria: and Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to

¹ Or, *by the wilderness to*

faithful remnant. The LORD will manifest Himself through the powers of punishment for the sake of the guilty, but for the sake of the remnant chastisement will be succeeded by peace and rest. The LORD is not in the storm, but above the storm, and at His will the storm will cease.

13. *he wrapped his face*] He went out because he was commanded; he wrapped his face in his mantle because he was afraid to look upon God. Cp. Exod. iii. 6.

What doest thou here, Elijah?] The Divine question is repeated in order that the Divine lesson may be repeated and impressed on the prophet. Cp. our Lord's threefold question to St Peter, 'Lovest thou me' (John xxi. 15, 16, 17).

15. *to the wilderness of Damascus*] Better as marg., *by the wilderness to Damascus.*

15, 16. *anoint Hazael...and Jehu...shalt thou anoint*] Ahab had relapsed immediately after the scene on Carmel, and fallen again under the sway of Jezebel. This being the case, Baal-worship would without doubt recover from the blow dealt it by Elijah. The whole lesson of the three years' drought and of its sudden termination at JEHOVAH'S will would be lost. Elijah is accordingly instructed to take the necessary steps for the destruction of Baal-worship. They were three in number. In the first place Ahab was to be attacked from without by the Syrians, and for this purpose the warlike Hazael was to take the throne of Ben-hadad, whose martial spirit had been quenched by defeat and perhaps also by advancing age. Secondly, when Ahab was thus weakened, Jehu was to be encouraged, perhaps with the connivance of the Syrians, to seize his throne. For this part Jehu was selected as a known opponent of Baal-worship, and also as a ruthless soldier. Thus the supporters of Ahab or the worshippers of Baal (the two expressions are in great part synonymous) would fall by the sword of Hazael or by the sword of Jehu. In the third place Elijah was to appoint as his own successor the vigorous and whole-hearted Elisha,

be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-
 meholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room. And 17
 it shall come to pass, that him that escapeth from the sword
 of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the
 sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay. Yet will I leave *me* seven 18
 thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto
 Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him. So he 19
 departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who
 who might be trusted under Jehu to complete the work which Elijah
 had begun of destroying the adherents of Baal.

The prophet on receiving these instructions proceeded to call Elisha,
 but he went no further. His courage, though great, was spasmodic.
 He shrank from anointing Hazael and from anointing Jehu. While he
 hesitated the opportunity passed, and the times changed. Strangely
 enough a fresh sin, the murder of Naboth, brought Ahab to repentance,
 such as he had not shewed before. In consequence of this repentance
 God told Elijah that the judgement on the house of Ahab was to be
 postponed (xxi. 27—29). So the judgement slept, and it was not till
 twelve or fourteen years later, in the reign of Jehoram, that Hazael
 became king of Syria (2 K. viii. 7—15), and a prophet at Elisha's
 command anointed Jehu king of Israel (2 K. ix. 1—10).

16. *Jehu the son of Nimshi*] In 2 K. ix. 2 the fuller genealogy is
 given, *Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi*.

Abel-meholah] A town and district in the Jordan valley. Jerome in
 the *Onomasticon* writes, 'There is at the present day a village in the
 Jordan valley at the tenth [Roman] mile-stone from Scythopolis (i.e.
 Beth-shan) southward called Beth-maula (i.e. Beth-meholah).'

in thy room] The phrase does not necessarily suggest that Elijah's
 end was very near, for Elisha had to minister to Elijah for some time
 before he was fitted to succeed him.

17. *the sword of Hazael*] Cp. 2 K. viii. 12; x. 31, 33; xiii. 22.

shall Jehu slay] Cp. 2 K. x. 18—28.

shall Elisha slay] There is no record of the fulfilment of this
 promise, but this fact is not surprising. The book of Kings renounces
 any claim to be a complete record. Cp. xvi. 27 and *passim*.

18. *will I leave me*] i.e. will I preserve as a remnant. *Seven
 thousand* is to be taken not in the strict numerical sense, but as an
 expression of completeness. God knows all those 'that are His.'

kissed him] The Hebrew word means to kiss as a mark of homage
 or worship. Cp. Job xxxi. 26, 27; Ps. ii. 12; Hos. xiii. 2. Muslim
 pilgrims kiss a certain 'Black Stone' in the Kaaba at Mecca. Among
 the Greeks 'kissing the hand to the god was not unusual' (*Camb.
 Companion to Greek Studies*, p. 323).

19—21. THE CALL OF ELISHA.

19. *and found Elisha*] It is not said that Elijah made any attempt
 to carry out the other parts of his commission, but the narrative may be
 incomplete.

was plowing, with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed over unto him, and cast
 20 his mantle upon him. And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee. And he said unto him,
 21 Go back again; for what have I done to thee? And he returned from following him, and took the yoke of oxen, and slew them, and ¹boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

¹ Or, roasted

and he with the twelfth] The other eleven being driven by servants. Elisha appears (like St Matthew and like the Sons of Zebedee) as one who had great possessions to forsake at his call.

cast his mantle upon him] Claiming him as spiritually akin by so doing. Cp. Ruth iii. 9. The mantle (Heb. *addereth*) ultimately fell to Elisha. Cp. 2 K. i. 8, note; ii. 13.

20. *for what have I done to thee?*] Elijah by using words which suggest that he is taking back his invitation tests Elisha's readiness for service.

21. *the instruments of the oxen*] In particular the heavy wooden yoke. Cp. 2 Sam. xxiv. 22. It was a whole-hearted sacrifice, in which no cost was counted.

gave unto the people] Like Levi, he celebrated his call to service with a feast (Luke v. 29).

went after Elijah] He was not repelled by an apparent rebuff.

ministered] Cp. 2 K. iii. 11.

CH. XX. TWO SYRIAN CAMPAIGNS.

The order of the events of the reign of Ahab is uncertain. No event is connected with a particular year, and the reference of the only note of sequence which is given ('after these things' xxi. 1) cannot be traced. If we follow the arrangement of the Hebrew (and English) text, 'these things' would seem to refer to the two invasions of the Syrians. In LXX. however chs. xx. and xxi. are read in the reverse order, and moreover the words, *And it came to pass after these things that*, are not found. Thus LXX. groups together the four Elijah-chapters, xvii.—xix. and xxi., and places after them the two chapters describing Syrian wars, namely, xx. and xxii. It is probable that this section of the book (chs. xvii.—xxii.) has been compiled partly (ch. xx. and part of ch. xxii.) from the royal annals, and partly (chs. xvii.—xix., xxi.) from a book of the lives of the Prophets, and that in the work of compilation whatever notes of time previously existed were lost.

The Syrian wars narrated in chs. xx. and xxii. read in connexion with an important notice of Ahab in an Assyrian inscription, raise

And Ben-hadad the king of Syria gathered all his host together: and there were thirty and two kings with him, and horses and chariots: and he went up and besieged Samaria, and fought against it. And he sent messengers to Ahab king of Israel, into the city, and said unto him, Thus saith Ben-hadad, Thy silver and thy gold is mine; thy wives also and thy children, even the goodliest, are mine. And the king of Israel answered and said, It is according to thy

certain difficulties, which must be briefly noticed. Shalmaneser II. (reigned 860—825 B.C.)¹ narrates that in his sixth year (854 B.C.) he invaded Northern Syria, and defeated² at Karkar (on the Orontes) a confederacy of twelve kings under Irchulini king of Hamath. Among these confederates he specifies Ahab of Israel and the king of Damascus whose name is variously read *Bir'idri* and *Dad'idri* (i.e. *Hadad-ezer*, *Driver*, *Authority and Archaeology*, ed. 1, p. 93, note). We thus find Damascus and Israel not at war in the days of Ahab, but fighting shoulder to shoulder against a foreign foe. Moreover the name of Ahab's contemporary at Damascus as given by the Assyrians is certainly not Ben-hadad. It has been suggested that the course of the political history of the reign of Ahab is in outline as follows. At his accession Ahab was in alliance with Tyre, but the destruction of Baal-worship by Elijah was followed by a breach with Tyre, and (since Israel could not remain isolated) by an alliance of a dependent character with Damascus. As an ally or client of Damascus Ahab fought against Shalmaneser II. at Karkar. At a later time the king of Israel, finding the connexion with Damascus galling to him, broke with the Syrians. At first he was successful (ch. xx.), but later he fell in a vain attempt to recapture Ramoth-Gilead (ch. xxii.). The name *Ben-hadad* is probably an ancient misreading for *Bir'idri* or *Dad'idri*.

1-21. THE BATTLE OF SAMARIA.

1. *Ben-hadad*] See the last note. This Ben-hadad was probably the successor of the Ben-hadad of xv. 18.

thirty and two kings] The title *king* is given somewhat freely; in the book of Joshua almost every important city of Palestine has its 'king.' Cp. Josh. xii. 9-24, where thirty-one of these are enumerated.

and fought against it] This expression implies a partial success; probably the Syrians had succeeded in casting a 'bank' against the city wall. A 'bank' was a causeway of earth rising in height as it approached a fortification, so that the besiegers could attack the defenders of the wall from the same level. Battering rams and movable towers manned with archers were brought up by this means.

¹ The Shalmaneser of 2 K. xvii. 3 is Shalmaneser IV.

² There is reason for believing that the battle was indecisive.

saying, my lord, O king; I am thine, and all that I have.
 5 And the messengers came again, and said, Thus speaketh Ben-hadad, saying, I sent indeed unto thee, saying, Thou shalt deliver me thy silver, and thy gold, and thy wives, and
 6 thy children; but I will send my servants unto thee to-morrow about this time, and they shall search thine house, and the houses of thy servants; and it shall be, that ¹whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes, they shall put it in their
 7 hand, and take it away. Then the king of Israel called all the elders of the land, and said, Mark, I pray you, and see how this man seeketh mischief: for he sent unto me for my wives, and for my children, and for my silver, and for my
 8 gold; and I denied him not. And all the elders and all the people said unto him, Hearken thou not, neither consent.
 9 Wherefore he said unto the messengers of Ben-hadad, Tell my lord the king, All that thou didst send for to thy servant at the first I will do: but this thing I may not do. And the
 10 messengers departed, and brought him word again. And Ben-hadad sent unto him, and said, The gods do so unto

¹ Heb. *all the desire of thine eyes*

4. *I am thine, and all that I have*] Ahab acknowledges Ben-hadad as his suzerain, and is ready to buy Ben-hadad's friendship with large presents. No more than this is meant, as the sequel shews. Ahab uses a well-known Eastern hyperbole. The Eastern host in a similar strain says to his guest, *Bētī bēlak*, 'my house is thy house.'

6. *they shall search thine house*] Ben-hadad puts aside the courteous language of the East in order to make it clear that he demands complete submission from Ahab and his people.

whatsoever is pleasant in thine eyes] Ben-hadad will not allow Ahab to keep back his best.

7. *I denied him not*] Of course Ahab does not mean that he was ready to surrender all his wives and children and silver and gold, but that he was ready to pay a heavy tribute to the king of Syria. On a similar occasion according to an Assyrian Inscription Hezekiah sent to Sennacherib a 'present' which included besides a large sum in silver and gold, also Hezekiah's daughters, 'the women of his palace.' Cp. 2 K. xviii. 14 ff.

9. *Tell my lord the king*] Ahab though obliged to refuse the demand adheres to the tone of humble submission; Ben-hadad is 'the king'; he himself is Ben-hadad's servant.

10. *The gods do so*] Cp. xix. 2, note.

me, and more also, if the dust of Samaria shall suffice for handfuls for all the people that ¹follow me. And the king ¹¹ of Israel answered and said, Tell him, Let not him that girdeth on *his armour* boast himself as he that putteth it off. And it came to pass, when *Ben-hadad* heard this message, ¹² as he was drinking, he and the kings, in the ²pavilions, that he said unto his servants, ³Set yourselves in array. And they set themselves in array against the city. And, behold, ¹³ a prophet came near unto Ahab king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou seen all this great multitude? behold, I will deliver it into thine hand this day; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD. And Ahab said, By whom? ¹⁴

¹ Heb. *are at my feet*

² Or, *huts*

³ Or, *Place the engines. And they placed the engines*

the dust of Samaria] The use of this phrase implies a threat that the Syrian king will first reduce the city and all contained in it to dust. Cp. 2 K. xiii. 7.

for handfuls] Literally, *for the hollows of the hands*, the same Heb. word being used in Isa. xl. 12.

11. *Let not him that girdeth on*] i.e. Let not him who is beginning his work boast as one who has finished it.

12. *in the pavilions*] The Heb. word (*sukkah*) is used in Neh. viii. 14, 15 to describe the 'booths' or 'tabernacles' made of the branches and foliage of trees, in which the Israelites were commanded to live during the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles.

Set yourselves in array. And they set themselves in array] Aquila strictly following the Hebrew has simply, *ἔθετε καὶ ἐθήκατε*. Translate with marg., *Place (the engines). And they placed (the engines)*. Cp. v. 1, note.

13. *a prophet*] It is to be noticed that Elijah does not appear in either of the two chapters (xx. and xxii.) which deal with the Syrian wars, nor is there any allusion in ch. xx. to the special sins of Ahab. The king must indeed have appeared in a double light to his contemporaries, favourably as the champion of his country in the wars against Syria, and unfavourably as the tool of Jezebel in his religious policy, and in the murder of Naboth. Corresponding to these two sides of Ahab's character there were, it appears, two sets of narratives of his reign. The compiler of Kings quotes at length from both sets, and for the most part leaves them to tell their story without comment from himself.

that I am the LORD (Jehovah)] Ahab will know that the God of Israel is unchanging, the Saviour of His people in the present, as in the past. Cp. Exod. xiv. 13; Ps. xlv. 10.

14. *By whom?*] Ahab assumes that means will be used, and with soldierly brevity inquires by what means.

And he said, Thus saith the LORD, By the 'young men of the princes of the provinces. Then he said, Who shall ²begin
 15 the battle? And he answered, Thou. Then he mustered the young men of the princes of the provinces, and they were two hundred and thirty two: and after them he mustered all the people, even all the children of Israel,
 16 being seven thousand. And they went out at noon. But Ben-hadad was drinking himself drunk in the ³pavilions, he and the kings, the thirty and two kings that helped him.
 17 And the young men of the princes of the provinces went out first; and Ben-hadad sent out, and they told him, saying,
 18 There are men come out from Samaria. And he said, Whether they be come out for peace, take them alive; or
 19 whether they be come out for war, take them alive. So these went out of the city, the young men of the princes of
 20 the provinces, and the army which followed them. And they slew every one his man; and the Syrians fled, and Israel pursued them: and Ben-hadad the king of Syria
 21 escaped ⁴on an horse with horsemen. And the king of Israel went out, and smote the horses and chariots, and slew
 22 the Syrians with a great slaughter. And the prophet came near to the king of Israel, and said unto him, Go, strengthen

¹ Or, *servants*² Heb. *bind*³ Or, *huts*⁴ Or, *with horse and horsemen*

the young men] Better as marg., **the servants**. These retainers would be picked men.

of the provinces] The word is used in Esth. i. 1 of the 127 provinces of the Persian Empire, but it is not used in the O.T. (except perhaps in this chapter) of provinces of the Israelite kingdom. The reference must be to such divisions of the Kingdom as are mentioned in iv. 7 ff.

begin the battle] Better (as A.V.), **order the battle**, i.e. marshal the Israelite forces. Cp. 2 Chr. xiii. 3 (A.V.). *Battle* = 'a body of troops.' Skeat (*Camb. Companion*, p. 542) quotes Shakespeare, *J. C. V. I. 4*, 'Their battles are at hand.'

16. *at noon*]. i.e. in the heat of the day, an unexpected time.

18. *take them alive*] The speech of vain confidence.

21. *the horses and chariots*] There was no time to prepare the chariots for battle or for flight; only the horsemen (cavalry) escaped with Ben-hadad (v. 20).

and slew] Better, **and began to slay**; the tense is imperfect.

thyself, and mark, and see what thou doest: for at the return of the year the king of Syria will come up against thee.

And the servants of the king of Syria said unto him, ²³ Their god is a god of the hills; therefore they were stronger than we: but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they. And do this thing; ²⁴ take the kings away, every man out of his place, and put ¹captains in their room: and number thee an army, like the ²⁵ army that thou hast lost, horse for horse, and chariot for chariot: and we will fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they. And he hearkened unto their voice, and did so. And it came to pass at the ²⁶ return of the year, that Ben-hadad mustered the Syrians, and went up to Aphek, to fight against Israel. And the ²⁷

¹ Or, *governors* See ch. x. 15

22—24. SYRIAN INVASION REPEATED; THE BATTLE OF APIHEK.

22. *at the return of the year*] Cp. 2 Sam. xi. 1.

23. *Their god is*] A.V. *Their gods are*. The Hebrew may be translated either way, for *elohim*, 'god' is plural in form, and is sometimes used as a plural.

of the hills] Cp. xvi. 24, note.

in the plain] *The Plain* (Heb. *Mishor*, with the article prefixed) is a name applied to the table-land east of Jordan, part of which formed the dominion of Moab. Here, however, as in Isa. xl. 4 there is no such special reference. See note on *Aphek* (v. 26).

24. *captains*] Better as marg., *governors*; LXX. *σαρπασ*. The step recommended affected the whole administration of the kingdom of Syria. Cp. x. 15, note on *governors*.

25. *that thou hast lost*] Better, *which fell from thee*, i.e. 'which failed thee'; the turn of the phrase throws the blame on the army.

26. *Aphek*] The geography of this campaign is somewhat uncertain, the main question being, Did it take place on the east or on the west of Jordan? For the east it may be urged that the term '*the plain*' (Heb. *the Mishor*) is applied in several passages to the table-land east of Jordan, and that the modern village of *Fik* in the northern part of this table-land on the great road to Damascus probably represents an ancient Aphek (G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*, pp. 580—1). It is however more probable that the struggle took place on the west of Jordan. In the first place the Syrians were undertaking an offensive campaign in overwhelming force, and were not likely to hesitate to cross the river. In the second place they would find in the great plain of Jezreel the level ground they desired. Thirdly, their presence in the most fertile part of the land of Israel would be the strongest

children of Israel were mustered, and were victualled, and went against them: and the children of Israel encamped before them like two little flocks of kids; but the Syrians
 28 filled the country. And ¹a man of God came near and spake unto the king of Israel, and said, Thus saith the LORD, Because the Syrians have said, The LORD is a god of the hills, but he is not a god of the valleys; therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall
 29 know that I am the LORD. And they encamped one over against the other seven days. And so it was, that in the seventh day the battle was joined; and the children of Israel slew of the Syrians an hundred thousand footmen in one day.
 30 But the rest fled to Aphek, into the city; and the wall fell upon twenty and seven thousand men that were left. And

¹ Or, *the*

possible temptation to Israel to risk a battle even in the plain in order to stop their ravages. Fourthly, that there was an Aphek west of Jordan, either in the great plain of Jezreel or on the border of it, is beyond all doubt. It was towards such an *Aphek* that the Philistines concentrated their armies just before the battle of Gilboa (1 Sam. xxix. 1).

27. *were mustered*] In the account of the earlier battle (*vv.* 1—21) Ahab is specially mentioned as the king of Israel, and the leading part is assigned to him; in the present section on the contrary 'the king of Israel' is anonymous (see note on *v.* 34) and no *role* is given him in the battle. It has been suggested that the compiler has put next to each other two narratives, which refer to events separated by a much longer period than a single year. Joash the grandson of Jehu won a great victory at Aphek over a Syrian king named Ben-hadad (2 K. xiii. 17, 24, 25), and it is possible that the account in 1 K. xx. 22 ff. is the fuller record of this event. Cp. the note on *v.* 42.

and were victualled] Cp. Jud. xx. 10, 'We will take ten men of an hundred throughout all the tribes of Israel, ...to fetch victual for the people.'

like two little flocks of kids] This comparison suggests (1) that the Israelite army was divided into two parts, either for tactical reasons or through necessity, (2) that the Israelites were encamped on two hill-sides, and so were visible from afar like browsing goats. Cp. S. of S. vi. 5.

30. *the wall fell upon &c.*] This statement is so brief that it may be explained in more ways than one. It is not said that the fugitives were *killed* by the fall of the wall, so that the meaning may be simply that they were rendered defenceless by the catastrophe.

Ben-hadad fled, and came into the city, ¹into an inner chamber. And his servants said unto him, Behold now, we ³¹ have heard that the kings of the house of Israel are merciful kings: let us, we pray thee, put sackcloth on our loins, and ropes upon our heads, and go out to the king of Israel: peradventure he will save thy life. So they girded sackcloth ³² on their loins, and *put* ropes on their heads, and came to the king of Israel, and said, Thy servant Ben-hadad saith, I pray thee, let me live. And he said, Is he yet alive? he is my brother. Now the men ²observed diligently, and hastened ³³ ³to catch whether it were ⁴his mind; and they said, Thy brother Ben-hadad. Then he said, Go ye, bring him. Then Ben-hadad came forth to him; and he caused him to come up into the chariot. And *Ben-hadad* said unto him, ³⁴ The cities which my father took from thy father I will restore; and thou shalt make streets for thee in Damascus, as my father made in Samaria. And I, *said Ahab*, will let

¹ Or, *from chamber to chamber*
divined), and hastened

² Or, *took it as an omen* (Heb.

³ Another reading is, *to catch it from him*

⁴ Heb. *from him*

into an inner chamber] Cp. xxii. 25.

^{31.} *ropes upon our heads*] i.e. cords round our necks like prisoners.

^{33.} *observed diligently*] Rather, **were looking for an omen** (of good). Cp. marg.

hasted...his mind] Better as marg., **hasted to catch it** (i.e. the expression 'my brother') **from him**.

Thy brother Ben-hadad] Rather, **Ben-hadad is thy brother**.

^{34.} *The cities which my father took from thy father I will restore*] If the suggestion mentioned in the note on v. 27 is accepted, and the king of Israel to whom Ben-hadad speaks is indeed Joash (Jehoash), then we may illustrate these words of Ben-hadad from 2 K. xiii. 25 'And Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael the cities which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war.' If on the contrary Ahab be meant, we know nothing of the events alluded to. There is no record of wars between Ahab's father Omri and Syria, though it is not improbable that such hostilities occurred.

streets] i.e. bazaars for the sale of Israelite merchandise. Even in ancient days nations contended for markets and 'open doors' for commerce.

said Ahab] These words, which contain the only mention of the name of Ahab in vv. 22—43, are due to the English translators; they are not found in the Heb. text, nor in the ancient Versions.

thee go with this covenant. So he made a covenant with him, and let him go.

- 35 And a certain man of the sons of the prophets said unto his fellow by the word of the LORD, Smite me, I pray thee.
- 36 And the man refused to smite him. Then said he unto him, Because thou hast not obeyed the voice of the LORD, behold, as soon as thou art departed from me, a lion shall slay thee. And as soon as he was departed from him, a
- 37 lion found him, and slew him. Then he found another man, and said, Smite me, I pray thee. And the man
- 38 smote him, smiting and wounding him. So the prophet departed, and waited for the king by the way, and disguised
- 39 himself with his headband over his eyes. And as the king passed by, he cried unto the king: and he said, Thy servant went out into the midst of the battle; and, behold, a man turned aside, and brought a man unto me, and said, Keep this man: if by any means he be missing, then shall thy life be for his life, or else thou shalt pay a talent of
- 40 silver. And as thy servant was busy here and there, he was gone. And the king of Israel said unto him, So shall thy
- 41 judgement be; thyself hast decided it. And he hasted, and took the headband away from his eyes; and the king of
- 42 Israel discerned him that he was of the prophets. And he said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Because thou hast let go out of thy hand the man whom I had devoted to destruction, therefore thy life shall go for his life, and thy

35—43. THE KING OF ISRAEL REPROVED.

36. *thou hast not obeyed*] Cp. xiii. 21—24.

38. *with his headband*] A.V. (wrongly) 'with ashes,' the Heb. consonants being the same for both words ('headband' and 'ashes').

39. *Thy servant went out &c.*] Cp. Nathan's use of a story in reproving David (2 Sam. xii. 1—6).

a talent of silver] This large sum suggests that the prisoner of the story was a person of importance.

40. *thyself hast decided it*] This is an instance of a rare grammatical construction. The usual *thou* is omitted before *hast*, and *thyself* is used adverbially; the phrase in full would be, *By thyself thou hast decided it*. Cp. Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar* (1870), §§ 20, 241.

42. *the man whom I had devoted to destruction*] Lit., *the man of my anathema*. Cp. Josh. vi. 17, 21. The rebuke thus given reminds

people for his people. And the king of Israel went to his 43 house heavy and displeased, and came to Samaria.

And it came to pass after these things, that Naboth the 21 Jezreelite had a vineyard, which was in Jezreel, hard by the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. And Ahab spake unto 2 Naboth, saying, Give me thy vineyard, that I may have it for a garden of herbs, because it is near unto my house; and I will give thee for it a better vineyard than it: or, if it seem good to thee, I will give thee the worth of it in money. And Naboth said to Ahab, The LORD forbid it 3 me, that I should give the inheritance of my fathers unto thee. And Ahab came into his house heavy and displeased 4 because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him: for he had said, I will not give thee the inheritance of my fathers. And he laid him down upon

us of the wrath of the dying Elisha against king Joash for his slackness against the Syrians (2 K. xiii. 18, 19).

43. *went to his house heavy and displeased*] Omit *to his house* (so LXX.) and understand *went* in the metaphorical sense, 'behaved.' The king instead of manifesting penitence shewed himself froward and angry. In xxi. 27 we have a similar phrase in the opposite sense, '[Ahab] went softly,' after Elijah's rebuke.

CH. XXI. 1—16. THE JUDICIAL MURDER OF NABOTH.

1. *And it came to pass after these things, &c.*] See the introductory note to ch. xx.

palace] Heb. *hēykāl*, a foreign word used in the form *ikallu* ('great house') in the cuneiform inscriptions to designate the palace of the king of Assyria. It is used in vi. 3 (translated 'temple') to describe the larger hall of Solomon's temple, as distinguished from the smaller inner hall, the Holy of Holies, the *Dōbīr*. In 2 K. xx. 18 it is used of the palace of the king of Babylon.

king of Samaria] Cp. v. 18, 'which dwelleth in Samaria.' On the use of the name *Samaria* to include Northern Israel as a whole cp. note on xvi. 24.

3. *The LORD forbid it me*] For instances of similar feeling cp. the incident of the daughters of Zelophehad (Num. xxxvi. 6, 7), and the law of jubile (Lev. xxv. 23—28). If an individual wished to sell land he must sell it to a kinsman. Cp. Jer. xxxii. 7—10.

4. *And Ahab...of my fathers*] LXX. has a shorter text, *And the spirit of Ahab was troubled*, corresponding in expression with v. 5. The Heb. text may have been borrowed in part from xx. 43. Ahab knowing how strongly Israelite feeling would be with Naboth felt baffled by Naboth's refusal.

his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no bread.
 5 But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said unto him, Why
 6 is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread? And he
 said unto her, Because I spake unto Naboth the Jezreelite,
 and said unto him, Give me thy vineyard for money; or
 else, if it please thee, I will give thee *another* vineyard for
 7 it: and he answered, I will not give thee my vineyard. And
 Jezebel his wife said unto him, Dost thou now govern the
 kingdom of Israel? arise, and eat bread, and let thine heart
 be merry: I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the
 8 Jezreelite. So she wrote ¹letters in Ahab's name, and
 sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters unto the
 elders and to the nobles that were in his city, *and* that
 9 dwelt with Naboth. And she wrote in the letters, saying,
 Proclaim a fast, and set Naboth ²on high among the
 10 people: and set two men, sons of ³Belial, before him, and
 let them bear witness against him, saying, Thou didst
⁴curse God and the king. And then carry him out, and

¹ Or, a letter

² That is, *worthlessness*

³ Or, at the head of

⁴ Or, *renounce*

8. *sad*] Better, *froward, sullen*.

6. *I spake*] The Heb. tense is an imperfect, describing effort: *I tried to speak*, Naboth would not hear.

9. *Proclaim a fast*] This meant a cessation of work so that men could the better attend to the urgent business assigned them.

set Naboth on high] Cp. Gen. xl. 20, '[Pharaoh] lifted up the head of the chief butler and the head of the chief baker among his servants,' i.e. brought them forth before all men.

10. *two men*] Two witnesses were required to support a capital charge (Deut. xvii. 6).

sons of Belial] *Belial* is not a proper name, but a Heb. word retained and transliterated owing to the difficulty of finding a suitable English equivalent for it. The Revised Version is not consistent with itself: here it retains *sons of Belial* from the A.V., but in Deut. xiii. 13 it gives *base fellows* (marg. *sons of worthlessness*). LXX. gives, 'transgressors' (Deut.) and 'sons of transgressors' (Kings); the English Versions in 2 Sam. xxii. 5 have, 'the floods of *ungodly men*' A.V., 'the floods of *ungodliness*' R.V.

Thou didst curse God and the king] LXX. (a literal rendering of the Hebrew) *ἠλόγησας θεὸν καὶ βασιλέα*, *Thou didst bless God and the king*. The word 'bless' is here used as a euphemism. Cp. Job i. 5 (with margin). For the offence and its punishment cp. Exod. xxii. 28;

stone him, that he die. And the men of his city, even the 11
 elders and the nobles who dwelt in his city, did as Jezebel
 had sent unto them, according as it was written in the
 letters which she had sent unto them. They proclaimed 12
 a fast, and set Naboth ¹on high among the people. And 13
 the two men, sons of Belial, came in and sat before him:
 and the men of Belial bare witness against him, even
 against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying,
 Naboth did ²curse God and the king. Then they carried him
 forth out of the city, and stoned him with stones, that he
 died. Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, Naboth is stoned, 14
 and is dead. And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard 15
 that Naboth was stoned, and was dead, that Jezebel said
 to Ahab, Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth
 the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money: for
 Naboth is not alive, but dead. And it came to pass, when 16
 Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab rose up to go
 down to the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, to take
 possession of it.

And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, 17
 saying, Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, which 18

¹ Or, at the head of

² Or, renounce

Lev. xxiv. 10—23; also Acts vi. 11. The rendering of the margin,
Thou didst renounce, is a paraphrase; *bleſs* = 'say, Good-bye to' =
 'renounce.'

11. *did as Jezebel had sent unto them*] It was not the first time that
 Jezebel had carried out a deed of bloodshed. Cp. xviii. 4.

13. *sat before him*] The witnesses were confronted with the
 accused in the assembly. To give evidence they probably stood up.
 Cp. Deut. xix. 15, 16; Ps. xxxv. 11. In the History of Susanna
 (v. 34) the witnesses rise up and lay their hands on the head of the
 accused.

14. *Naboth is stoned*] His sons perished with him (2 K. ix. 26).
 This was a not unusual procedure. Cp. Josh. vii. 24, 25. Among
 the early Hebrews a man was seldom or never treated in his capacity
 as an individual; his guilt was regarded as shared by his descendants.
 It is narrated of Amaziah as noteworthy that he did *not* put to death
 the children of his father's murderers (2 K. xiv. 6).

15. *take possession of*] Better, *inherit*. Cp. v. 19.

17—29. THE SIN LAID BARE.

17. *the Tishbite*] Cp. xvii. 1, note.

dwelleth in Samaria: behold, he is in the vineyard of Naboth, whither he is gone down to take possession of
 19 it. And thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Hast thou killed, and also taken possession? and thou shalt speak unto him, saying, Thus saith the LORD, In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth shall
 20 dogs lick thy blood, even thine. And Ahab said to Elijah, Hast thou found me, O mine enemy? And he answered, I have found thee: because thou hast sold thyself to do
 21 that which is evil in the sight of the LORD. Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will utterly sweep thee away, and will cut off from Ahab every man child, and him that is
 22 shut up and him that is left at large in Israel: and I will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger,
 23 and hast made Israel to sin. And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the
 24 rampart of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city

¹ According to some ancient authorities, *in the portion*, as in 2 Kings ix. 10, 36

18. *which dwelleth in Samaria*] His own inhesitance from his father was in Samaria, but he must needs grasp at Naboth's inheritance in Jezreel.

19. *taken possession*] Rather, *made thyself heir*.

thy blood, even thine] This judgement was accomplished not on Ahab himself, but on Ahab through his son Joram (2 K. ix. 26). But the Hebrews believed that a man lived on in his descendants, so that what they suffered was considered to be part of his punishment. Cp. v. 14, note; xvi. 6, note; Exod. xx. 5, 6.

20. *O mine enemy*] Cp. xviii. 17 ('thou troubler of Israel') and xxii. 8 ('I hate him,' spoken by Ahab of Micaiah).

thou hast sold thyself] At the price of a vineyard.

21, 22. *Behold, I will bring evil &c.*] Similar denunciations are uttered against Jeroboam (xiv. 10) and against Baasha (xvi. 3). Cp. note on xiv. 10. The compiler here summarises in his own words the prophet's message.

23. *spake the LORD*] This translation suggests that a separate message from the LORD was delivered to Jezebel; whether by Elijah or by another is not said. The words however would be better translated, *hath the LORD spoken*, as part of Elijah's denunciation.

by the rampart] A 'rampart' (Heb. *hēl*) corresponds to the Roman *vallum*; it consisted of a ditch and a wall of earth thrown up in the

the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat. (But there was none like unto Ahab, 25 which did sell himself to do that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he 26 did very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites did, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel.) And it came to pass, when Ahab heard 27 those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 28 Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because 29 he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.

And they continued three years without war between 22 Syria and Israel. And it came to pass in the third year, 2

digging of the ditch. It is the *ditch* rather than the rampart, which is referred to here. Such a defence was sometimes made in front of a wall, hence LXX. *πρωτελίσια*. On the other hand Vulg. Pesh. and Targ. read *in the portion* (Heb. *hilek*) here as in 2 K. ix. 10, 36.

24. *the fowls of the air*] Cp. xlv. 11, note.

26. *all that the Amorites did*] The worship of Baal was ultimately derived from the pre-Israelite inhabitants of Palestine, the 'seven nations,' called here for brevity simply 'Amorites.' Cp. Amos ii. 9, 10. The influence of the Tyrian Jezebel revived a cult, which had survived from very early times.

27. *lay in sackcloth*] i.e. slept in sackcloth.

softly] i.e. without noise and pomp of followers, and *perhaps* on foot. Cp. Gen. xxiii. 14; Isa. viii. 6. Targ. 'barefoot.'

29. *humbleth himself*] Cp. 2 K. xxii. 19.

CH. XXII. 1—4 (= 2 Chr. xviii. 1—3). JEHOSHAPHAT IN ALLIANCE WITH THE KING OF ISRAEL.

1. *And they continued three years without war*] Better, *And they sat still three years; there was no war*. If ch. xx. immediately preceded ch. xxii. in the earlier form of the narrative, the *three years* will perhaps date from the *covenant* of xx. 34. Cp. the introductory note to ch. xx. On the other hand if xx. 22—43 refers to the reign of Joash (cp. xx. 27, 42, with notes), then the *three years* will date from the battle of Samaria (xx. 1—21).

2. *in the third year*] This shews that the *three years* are reckoned inclusively.

that Jehoshaphat the king of Judah came down to the king
 3 of Israel. And the king of Israel said unto his servants,
 Know ye that Ramoth-gilead is ours, and we ¹be still, and take
 4 it not out of the hand of the king of Syria? And he said unto
 Jehoshaphat, Wilt thou go with me to battle to Ramoth-
 gilead? And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, I am
 as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses.
 5 And Jehoshaphat said unto the king of Israel, Inquire, I pray
 6 thee, at the word of the LORD to-day. Then the king of
 Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred
 men, and said unto them, Shall I go against Ramoth gilead,
 to battle, or shall I forbear? And they said, Go up; for
 7 the Lord shall deliver it into the hand of the king. But

¹ Or, *keep silence*

Jehoshaphat] There was an alliance (v. 44) cemented by marriage
 (2 K. viii. 16-18) between the two royal houses. It was continued
 in the next generation under Ahab's son Joram (Jehoram, 2 K. iii. 6, 7),
 until Ahaziah the son of Jehoshaphat and Joram himself were assassinated
 by Jehu (2 K. ix. 22-27).

came down] Both Jerusalem and Samaria are built on heights, but
 whereas Samaria is at an altitude of 1500 feet above the sea-level,
 Jerusalem stands at 2500 feet.

3. *his servants*] i.e. his ministers and officers. Cp. x. 5, note.

Ramoth-gilead] Cp. iv. 13, note.

we be still] The reason for claiming Ramoth at this time was no
 doubt that Syria was threatened by Assyria, and so could not use her
 whole strength in defence of the city. Shalmaneser after the battle of
 Karkar, which took place in the sixth year of his reign, renewed his
 attacks on Syria in his eleventh, fourteenth, and eighteenth years (Driver,
Authority and Archaeology, pp. 94, 95).

4. *I am as thou art*] Cp. 2 K. iii. 7.

5-28 (= 2 Chr. xviii. 4-27). THE PROPHECY OF MICAH.

5. *Inquire...at the word*] The use of the preposition 'at' after
 verbs of asking was once common in English. Cp. 2 Sam. xx. 18, 'ask
 counsel at Abel'; Dan. ii. 10 (A.V.), 'no king...asked such things at
 any magician.'

6. *gathered the prophets together*] The large number—400—suggests
 that these were rather 'sons of the prophets.' Cp. xx. 35; 2 K. ii. 3.
 They were prophets by profession, and not necessarily by call-

for the Lord shall deliver it] Or, *and may the Lord deliver it!*

Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here besides a prophet of the LORD, that we might inquire of him? And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, There is yet one man by whom we may inquire of the LORD, Micaiah the son of Imlah: but I hate him; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil. And Jehoshaphat said, Let not the king say so. Then the king of Israel called an ¹officer, 9 and said, Fetch quickly Micaiah the son of Imlah. Now 10 the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah sat each on his throne, arrayed in their robes, in ²an open place at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them. And Zedekiah the son 11

¹ Or, *eunuch*

² Heb. *a threshing-floor*

7. *Is there not here besides a prophet?*] Jehoshaphat with true insight prefers a man to a crowd; he may even have heard of the honesty of Micaiah.

8. *Micaiah?*] Where was Elijah? As his home was east of Jordan, and as he had received a direction to return 'by the wilderness to Damascus' after his flight from Jezreel (xix. 15), he was probably in Syrian territory. He had no message for the crisis, and so kept silence. The prophet could speak only as the word was given him (Num. xxii. 38).

9. *officer?*] Marg. *eunuch*; the Heb. word is the same as in 2 K. ix. 31. Cp. 2 K. viii. 6; xxv. 19. The general sense, *officer*, is probably right in most passages.

10. *arrayed in their robes?*] So Vulg. *uestiti cultu regio*. But better as LXX. *ενοπλοι, in armour*.

in an open place?] Better as marg., *in a threshing-floor*. The streets of Eastern cities are narrow, and there are few open places, except at the gates. Cp. 2 Sam. xxiv. 18.

prophesied before them?] The prophets worked themselves up to enthusiasm under the eye of the two kings, as vv. 11, 12 sufficiently shew. Cp. xviii. 28, 29; 1 Sam. x. 5.

11. *Zedekiah?*] Zedekiah and his associates were men whom we should naturally call *false prophets*, for they lured Ahab to his ruin by flattering words. It is however to be noted that the true prophet Micaiah regarded them as prophets inspired indeed by a spirit from JEHOVAH, only by a lying spirit. This is in accordance with the teaching of many passages of the Old Testament that both good and evil proceed from the LORD, and that he sometimes permits means that are morally evil to be used for the punishment of evil men. Zedekiah and his associates became 'deceived and deceivers,' probably because they started from a lower moral plane than Micaiah. They were 'worshippers of JEHOVAH to whom JEHOVAH was little more than a symbol of their nationality.' See note on v. 20, and A. B. Davidson, *PROPHECY in Hastings' Dictionary*, IV. 118.

of Chenaanah made him horns of iron, and said, Thus saith the LORD, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until they be consumed. And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramoth-gilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king. And the messenger that went to call Micaiah spake unto him, saying, Behold now, the words of the prophets, *declare* good unto the king with one mouth: let thy word, I pray thee, be like the word of one of them, and speak thou good. And Micaiah said, As the LORD liveth, what the LORD saith unto me, that will I speak. And when he was come to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall we forbear? And he answered him, Go up, and prosper; and the LORD shall deliver it into the hand of the king. And the king said unto him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou speak unto me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD? And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master; let them return every man to his house in peace. And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil? And he said, Therefore hear thou the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left. And the LORD said,

made him horns of iron] Symbolic actions were commonly used by true prophets as well as by false. Cp. Isa. xx. 2; Jer. xxvii. 2; xxviii. 10, 11; Ezek. iv. 1, 4, 9; v. 1.

shalt thou push] The Heb. word is translated 'gore' in Exod. xxi. 28—32; Deut. xxxiii. 17, 'His horns (i.e. the horns of the tribe of Joseph) are the horns of the wild ox: with them he shall push (marg. "gore") the peoples.' In an Egyptian hymn Rameses II. is described as 'the strong bull against the Ethiopians; his horn pushes them' (Erman, *Ancient Egypt*, E. T., p. 57).

12. *and prosper*] This is an addition to their former answer (v. 6), which was more cautious.

15. *Go up, and prosper*] A mocking echo of the false prophets' words.

17. *These have no master*] Rather, **These have a master who is no master.** Ahab was no longer the man he had been in the earlier battle under the walls of Samaria (xx. 14).

Who shall ¹entice Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead? And one said on this manner; and another said on that manner. And there came forth ²a ²¹spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will entice him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he ²²said, I will go forth, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt entice him, and shalt prevail also: go forth, and do so. Now therefore, ²³behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these thy prophets; and the LORD hath spoken evil concerning thee. Then Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah came ²⁴near, and smote Micaiah on the cheek, and said, Which way went the spirit of the LORD from me to speak unto thee? And Micaiah said, Behold, thou shalt see on that ²⁵day, when thou shalt go ³into an inner chamber to hide

¹ Or, *deceive*² Heb. *the spirit*³ Or, *from chamber to chamber*

20. *entice*] Marg. *deceive*; LXX. ἀπαρτήσῃ. Delusion is sometimes a first stage in Divine punishment. Cp. 2 Thess. ii. 9, 11 where a *working of error* (ἐνέργεια πλάνης), also described as a *working of Satan with... lying wonders*, is said to be a punishment sent by God on those *who had pleasure in unrighteousness*. Micaiah's vision in *vv.* 19—22 may be a parable, but behind it lies a great truth to which the religious experience of all ages bears witness. The man who (like Ahab) sells himself to work evil, loses his power of discerning between good and evil; the flattering tongue of a number of worldly prophets prevails with such a man over the utterance of the one spiritually minded seer. Cp. *v.* 11, note.

21. *a spirit*] The Hebrew text has the definite article, but in English the rendering with the indefinite article is better. Certainly *the spirit* is not *the Spirit of the LORD*, nor *the spirit of prophecy*, but simply *the spirit of whom I am about to tell*. This idiomatic use of the definite article is not uncommon in Hebrew. Cp. 2 K. ii. 1 (Heb. *the whirlwind*); 1 Sam. xvii. 34, *there came a lion* (Heb. *the lion*); Job i. 13, *there was a day* (Heb. *the day*).

stood before] As a servant waiting for the word of command. Cp. x. 8, note.

23. *the LORD hath spoken evil*] By this plain speaking of the prophet a way of escape was offered to Ahab from the delusions with which he was beset. Old standing prejudice alone prevented a timely change of mind.

24. *on the cheek*] A despicable act. Cp. Mic. v. 1; Matt. v. 39.

25. *thou shalt see*] i.e. 'thou shalt know by experience.'

26 thyself. And the king of Israel said, Take Micaiah, and carry him back unto Amon the governor of the city, and
 27 to Joash the king's son; and say, Thus saith the king, Put this fellow in the prison, and feed him with bread of affliction
 28 and with water of affliction, until I come in peace. And Micaiah said, If thou return at all in peace, the LORD hath not spoken by me. And he said, Hear, ye peoples, all of you.

29 So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah
 30 went up to Ramoth-gilead. And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, I will disguise myself, and go into the battle; but put thou on thy robes. And the king of Israel
 31 disguised himself, and went into the battle. Now the king of Syria had commanded the thirty and two captains of his chariots, saying, Fight neither with small nor great, save
 32 only with the king of Israel. And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, Surely it is the king of Israel; and they turned aside to
 33 fight against him: and Jehoshaphat cried out. And it came

to hide thyself] From the pursuit of enemies. Cp. xx. 30.

26. *Joash the king's son*] The sons of Ahab known by name were Ahaziah (v. 51) and Jehoram (*Joram*, 2 K. iii. 1; *al.*). The seventy sons of Ahab mentioned in 2 K. x. 1 probably included some grandsons.

27. *bread of affliction...water of affliction*] Cp. Ezek. iv. 9—11, 16. Small in quantity and bad in quality.

28. *ye peoples*] Israel, Judah, Edom, and Moab. Cp. 2 K. i. 1; iii. 9. Or perhaps the appeal is rhetorical as in Mic. i. 2.

29—38 (= 2 Chr. xviii. 28—34). THE FATE OF AHAH.

30. *put thou on thy robes*] Jehoshaphat is to remain as he was before (v. 10), but Ahab so far heeds Micaiah's words as to disguise himself before entering into the battle.

31. *the thirty and two captains of his chariots*] Cp. xx. 1, 24. While the rest of the Syrian army met the Israelite attack, the chariots were to act as an independent force whose primary task was to kill or capture Ahab. The king of Syria felt that his best chance of victory lay in the fall of the Israelite leader.

32. *they turned aside to fight against him*] Better, following the Heb. reading of 2 Chr. xviii. 31, **they compassed him about to fight against him.** So LXX. of Kings.

cried out] In Chron. an additional clause follows: *and the LORD helped him; and God moved them to depart from him.*

to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw that it was not the king of Israel, that they turned back from pursuing him. And a certain man drew his bow ¹at a venture, and ³⁴ smote the king of Israel between ²the joints of the harness: wherefore he said unto the driver of his chariot, Turn thine hand, and carry me out of the host; for I am sore wounded. And the battle increased that day: and ³⁵ the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians, and died at even: and the blood ran out of the wound into the bottom of the chariot. And there went a cry ³⁶ throughout the host about the going down of the sun, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his country. So the king died, and was brought to Samaria; ³⁷ and they buried the king in Samaria. And they washed ³⁸ the chariot by the pool of Samaria; and the dogs licked up

¹ Heb. *in his simplicity*

² Or, *the lower armour and the breastplate*

^{34.} *at a venture*] Better as marg., *in his simplicity*. The writer portrays the overruling of 'chance' by Providence. Ahab disguises himself in vain; the king of Syria issues his special orders against Ahab in vain. Man proposes, but God disposes through a hand which strikes 'in its simplicity.'

between the joints of the harness] Better as marg., *between the lower armour and the breastplate*. Probably Ahab's cuirass was of the same construction as the Roman *lorica segmentata*, which had in addition to two broad plates for the breast and the back respectively, also five or six bands fastened on to the breastplate and backplate, and running round the lower part of the body.

^{35.} *the battle increased*] Lit. *the battle went up*; Targ. *the men of war went up*. The battle continued in spite of Ahab's wound.

^{36.} *every man to his country*] Cp. v. 28, note.

^{37.} *So the king died*] LXX. 'because the king is dead,' joining the clause to v. 36 as the concluding words of the *cry* which went through the host.

and was brought to Samaria] Lit. *and he came*. Read with LXX. *and they came*. The difference in Hebrew between the two readings is slight.

^{38.} *the pool of Samaria*] Samaria was utterly destroyed in 720 B.C. by John Hyrcanus the Maccabee, and no feature of the ancient city can now be identified. But there seems to have been no lack of water there, for Hyrcanus is said to have carried out his work of destruction by inundating the city (Josephus, *Antiq.* XIII. § 281).

his blood; (now the harlots washed themselves *there*;) according unto the word of the LORD which he spake.
 39 Now the rest of the acts of Ahab, and all that he did, and the ivory house which he built, and all the cities that he built, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of
 40 the kings of Israel? So Ahab slept with his fathers; and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

41 And Jehoshaphat the son of Asa began to reign over
 42 Judah in the fourth year of Ahab king of Israel. Jehoshaphat was thirty and five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and five years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Azubah the daughter of Shilhi.
 43 And he walked in all the way of Asa his father; he turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the LORD: howbeit the high places were not taken away;

¹ Or, and they washed the armour

(now the harlots washed themselves there)] LXX. reads, 'the harlots washed themselves in his blood.' It was an additional indignity. The marg., and they washed the armour is not right, for the Heb. substantive does not mean *armour*.

39, 40. THE EPILOGUE TO THE REIGN OF AHAB.

We have no details regarding the building of the ivory house, but the mention of ivory suggests that Ahab like Solomon carried on foreign trade through his allies the Zidonians. Neither do we know what cities Ahab built, unless Jericho (xvi. 34) is to be reckoned among them. It must be remembered that in Hebrew the word 'build' does not necessarily mean 'build *de novo*'; it is applied to *rebuilding* and also to *strengthening with fortifications*. Cp. ix. 15—18.

41—50 (cp. 2 Chr. xx. 31—xxi. 1). JEHOSHAPHAT KING OF JUDAH.

41. *in the fourth year of Ahab*] This statement combined with that of v. 51, that Ahaziah, Ahab's son, succeeded his father in the *seventeenth* year of Jehoshaphat, gives the length of Ahab's reign at 21 years at the most, and, more probably, since the Hebrew method of reckoning was inclusive, at 20 years. In xvi. 29, however, the same reign is said to have lasted 22 years, i.e. probably 21, if reckoned inclusively. An exact reconciliation of these statements is impossible, but the discrepancy is slight.

43. *the way of Asa*] Cp. xv. 11, 14.
high places] Cp. xi. 7, note; xv. 14.

the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places. And Jehoshaphat made peace with the king of Israel. 44 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoshaphat, and his might 45 that he shewed, and how he warred, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And 46 the remnant of the sodomites, which remained in the days of his father Asa, he put away out of the land. And there 47 was no king in Edom: a deputy was king. Jehoshaphat 48 made ships of Tarshish to go to Ophir for gold: but they went not; for the ships were broken at Ezion-geber. Then 49 said Ahaziah the son of Ahab unto Jehoshaphat, Let my servants go with thy servants in the ships. But Jehoshaphat would not. And Jehoshaphat slept with his fathers, and 50 was buried with his fathers in the city of David his father: and Jehoram his son reigned in his stead. Ahaziah the son 51

the people] This seems to imply that Jehoshaphat himself did not use the high places. Cp. iii. 3.

44. *made peace*] His father Asa had been at war with Baasha of Israel 'all their days' (xv. 32). The rise of a new dynasty, that of Omri, in Israel paved the way towards peace. Cp. v. 2; 2 Chr. xviii. 1.

45. *his might...and how he warred*] Cp. 2 K. iii. 7 ff.; 2 Chr. xx. 1—30.

46. *the remnant of the sodomites*] Cp. xiv. 24, note; xv. 12. *put away*] Better, *destroyed*. The same Heb. word (*bi'ēr*) is used in xiv. 10; Deut. xiii. 5 [6 Heb.]; xvii. 7. It is characteristic of Deuteronomy.

47. *a deputy*] i.e. of Jehoshaphat. Heb. *niṣṣāb*. Cp. iv. 7, note. Edom rebelled under Jehoshaphat's son, Joram (2 K. viii. 20—22).

48. *ships of Tarshish*] Cp. x. 22, note.

Ophir] Cp. x. 11, note.

were broken] i.e. 'wrecked.' Cp. Ps. xlvi. 7.

Ezion-geber] Cp. ix. 26, note.

49. *Jehoshaphat would not*] The Chronicler represents matters differently. Jehoshaphat joined the wicked Ahaziah in shipbuilding; a prophet predicted the failure of the enterprise from the unholiness of the alliance; the ships were wrecked (2 Chr. xx. 35—37). But the Chronicler probably misread his authority, and the account in Kings is to be preferred as the earlier.

50. *Jehoram*] In 2 K. viii. 20—24 by a common shortening of the name he is called *Joram*. The fact that Ahab and Jehoshaphat each had a son named *Jehoram* (*Joram*) is perhaps to be connected with the alliance between the two kings.

of Ahab began to reign over Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and he reigned
 52 two years over Israel. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son
 53 of Nebat, 'wherein he made Israel to sin. And he served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD, the God of Israel, according to all that his father had done.

¹ Or, *who made*

51—53. AHAZIAH SUCCEEDS AHAB.

51. *two years*] This is by inclusive reckoning. Ahaziah came to the throne in the *seventeenth* year of Jehoshaphat, and in the *eighteenth* year he was succeeded by Jehoram (*Foram*).

53. *he served Baal*] Elijah's destruction of the prophets of Baal (xviii. 40) did not involve the end of Baal-worship in Israel. Jezebel survived Elijah, and her influence lasted until Jehu 'destroyed Baal out of Israel' (2 K. x. 28).

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE KINGS.

AND Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of 1
Ahab. And Ahaziah fell down through the lattice in his 2
upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he

CH. I. 1 (cp. iii. 4—27). REVOLT OF MOAB.

1. *And Moab rebelled*] The division of Kings into two books is quite arbitrary; in LXX. this verse is repeated; it closes the First Book and also opens the Second. See the Introduction, pages x, xi.

2—16. ELIJAH AND AHAZIAH.

This story of Ahaziah's sickness and death falls naturally into two parts. The first part (vv. 2—8) is complete in itself. Ahaziah falls sick, and sends to consult a foreign god concerning his recovery. His messengers do not reach their destination, for they are turned back by a man who sends the king an unfavourable answer from the God of Israel. Ahaziah on hearing what kind of a man bore the message, exclaims, *It is Elijah*, and (v. 17) dies according to the answer which he has received.

The account given in the second part (vv. 9—16) is possibly a later addition to the story. These verses are midrashic in character, and seem to have been composed for what the writer conceived to be the greater glory of Elijah. It is to be remembered that our Lord rebuked his disciples for wishing to act in the manner here ascribed to the great prophet (Luke ix. 51—56).

2—8. AHAZIAH'S SICKNESS AND ELIJAH'S PROPHECY.

2. *the lattice*] Probably just such a one as is to be seen in the East at the present day. From many a native house in Cairo high up on the outer wall there juts out a wooden cage pierced with many small openings of fanciful shapes through which the sightseer may look into the street without being seen. Ahaziah's lattice was apparently insecure.

was sick] The Heb. word is applied to one suffering from wounds and injuries; it is used in 1 K. xxii. 34.

sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this sickness. But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it because there is no God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? Now therefore thus saith the LORD, Thou shalt not come down from the bed whither thou art gone up, but shalt surely die. And Elijah departed. And the messengers returned unto him, and he said unto them, Why is it that ye are returned? And they said unto him, There came up a man to meet us, and said unto us, Go, turn again unto the king that sent you, and say unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Is it because there is no God in Israel, that thou sendest to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? therefore thou shalt not come down from the bed whither thou

Baal-zebub] If this reading (which has the support of LXX. and of the versions generally) is correct, we have here a title which means 'the baal (or "lord") of flies.' 'Flies' in Heb. is a generic term, embracing many kinds of winged insects. In the East 'flies' amount to a plague; e.g. they are a frequent cause of ophthalmia specially with young children. A *god of flies* therefore would be an important deity, for he could send flies as a punishment, and banish them in answer to prayers and offerings. In Arcadia Zeus himself was worshipped under the name of *Ἄρκυμιος*, as the god who chased away flies (Pausanias v. xiv. 2). To the god of flies was doubtless attributed the power of driving away other evils, e.g. sicknesses, as well.

The reading *Baal-zebub* however cannot be pronounced to be certain. It is possible indeed that it is an intentional corruption of the real title of the god of Ekron, which may have been *Baal-zebul*, 'the lord of the Dwelling,' i.e. of the Temple of Ekron. This is the reading of the name given by Symmachus, and it is supported by the evidence of the New Testament. The name of the heathen god *Beelzebub*¹ had become a name of ridicule applicable to a demon among the Jews of our Lord's time.

Ekron] One of the five chief cities of the Philistines (1 Sam. v. 10; vi. 16, 17). Under the form *Amkarruna* it is mentioned in the Assyrian inscriptions as having been savagely punished by Sennacherib for joining Hezekiah in a revolt against Assyria. It is the modern *Akir* about six miles due west of Tell-el-Jezer (Gezer, 1 K. ix. 15).

3. *the angel of the LORD*] Cp. xix. 5, 7.

¹ *Βεελζεβούλ* (or *Βεεζεβούλ*, the first *λ* having fallen out in pronunciation before *ς*) is beyond doubt the right reading in Matt. x. 25 *al.*

art gone up, but shalt surely die. And he said unto them, 7
 What manner of man was he which came up to meet you,
 and told you these words? And they answered him, He 8
 was 'an hairy man, and girt with a girdle of leather about
 his loins. And he said, It is Elijah the Tishbite. Then 9
the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty. And
 he went up to him: and, behold, he 'sat on the top of the
 hill. And he spake unto him, O man of God, the king hath
 said, Come down. And Elijah answered and said to the 10
 captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, let fire come down
 from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there
 came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his
 fifty. And again he sent unto him another captain of fifty 11
 with his fifty. And he answered and said unto him, O man
 of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly. And 12
 Elijah answered and said unto them, If I be a man of God, let
 fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty.
 And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed

¹ Or, a man with a garment of hair

² Or, dwell

8. *an hairy man*] Better, a man with a mantle of hair. Cp. ii. 8, 13, 14 and especially Zech. xiii. 4, 'The prophets shall be ashamed...neither shall they be clothed with a mantle of hair to deceive' (literal translation). The mantle (Heb. *addereth*) of hair was a prophet's distinctive dress. Cp. Matt. iii. 4, 'John the Baptist had his garment of camel's hair,—ἀπὸ τριχῶν καμήλου.'

9—16. ELIJAH BROUGHT BEFORE AHAZIAH.

9. *a captain of fifty*] Cp. ii. 7; Exod. xviii. 21; Deut. i. 15; i Sam. viii. 12.

sat] Marg. *dwell*. This ambiguity is inherent in the meaning of the Heb. word. Cp. xix. 15.

the hill] Or, *the mountain*; so LXX. Perhaps Carmel-is meant.

10. *let fire come down from heaven*] Cp. i K. xviii. 38; Luke ix. 54; where however the words *even as Elijah did* are absent from the best authorities.

11. *And he answered*] The expression *to answer* is used in Hebrew in a wider sense than in English; here the captain *answers* the defiant bearing of the prophet, not anything which the prophet had said. Cp. i Sam. ix. 17 (with margin).

Come down quickly] A more urgent message than in v. 9.

12. *unto them*] LXX. *unto him*.

the fire of God] Cp. i K. xviii. 38, note. In v. 10 it is simply 'fire'; and so LXX. in this verse also. No difference of meaning is to be supposed.

13 him and his fifty. And again he sent the captain of a third
 fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went
 up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and
 besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray
 thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants,
 14 be precious in thy sight. Behold, there came fire down
 from heaven, and consumed the two former captains of fifty
 with their fifties: but now let my life be precious in thy
 15 sight. And the angel of the LORD said unto Elijah, Go
 down with him: be not afraid of him. And he arose, and
 16 went down with him unto the king. And he said unto him,
 Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast sent messengers
 to inquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron, is it because
 there is no God in Israel to inquire of his word? therefore
 thou shalt not come down from the bed whither thou art
 17 gone up, but shalt surely die. So he died according to the
 word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken. And Jehoram
 began to reign in his stead in the second year of Jehoram
 the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah; because he had no
 18 son. Now the rest of the acts of Ahaziah which he did, are
 they not written in the book of the chronicles of the
 kings of Israel?

2 And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up
 Elijah by a whirlwind into heaven, that Elijah went with

17, 18. AHAZIAH SUCCEEDED BY JEHORAM.

17. *And Jehoram*] LXX. (A), Vulg. Pesh. add *his brother*, which
 is a correct gloss, even if it be no part of the original text.

in the second year of Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah
 These words are not found in LXX., and their presence in the
 Massoretic text is doubtless due to scribal error. Jehoram of Israel
 came to the throne *in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat* (iii. 1).

CH. II. 1—12. THE ASSUMPTION OF ELIJAH.

This narrative, if its meaning be that Elijah was taken up to heaven
 in the body, is unique in the Bible. Neither the Translation of Enoch,
 nor the Ascension of our Lord is any parallel. Of Enoch it is said in
 Gen. v. 24 simply that God *took him*. This was explained by the later
 Jews to mean that he *did not see death* (Heb. xi. 5), but the words
 admit equally well a different interpretation. The Ascension of our
 Lord is no parallel, for He rose with His Resurrection body. It is

Elisha from Gilgal. And Elijah said unto Elisha, Tarry here, 2 I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me as far as Beth-el. And Elisha said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Beth-el. And 3 the sons of the prophets that were at Beth-el came forth to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he said, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. And Elijah 4 said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho. And the sons of the prophets that were at 5 Jericho came near to Elisha, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the LORD will take away thy master from thy head to-day? And he answered, Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace. And Elijah said unto him, Tarry here, I pray 6 thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave

probable that this mysterious account is figurative. As in the case of Moses (Deut. xxxiv. 6), the place of Elijah's burial was unknown.

1. *Gilgal*] This word, a place-name, is said to mean a 'sacred circle of stones,' such as Stonehenge. Cp. Josh. iv. 20. Such circles are not uncommon in Palestine (Nowack, *Heb. Archäologie*, vol. I. p. 93, where illustrations are given); indeed 'a little to the N. of *Bélin* [= *Beth-el*, cp. v. 2] is a remarkable circle of stones which may possibly have had a religious significance' (*Baedeker*, p. 213); and again at *Tell-Jeljul*, east of Jericho, there is an ancient cromlech (*Baedeker*, p. 167). Either of these may mark the site of the *Gilgal* mentioned here. There is evidence for the existence of more than one place called *Gilgal* in Old Testament times, but the *Gilgal* of iv. 38 is probably in any case to be identified with the *Gilgal* of ii. 1.

2. *they went down to Beth-el*] Better, *they went down by Beth-el*. One of the best known roads eastwards leads down past Beth-el into the Jordan Valley. Beth-el is one of the highest points of the central ridge of Palestine, and the usual phrase in the Old Testament is 'go up to Beth-el' (v. 23; Gen. xxxv. 1; Jud. i. 22; 1 Sam. x. 3).

3. *the sons of the prophets*] Cp. iv. 1, 38; ix. 1; 1 K. xx. 35. The prophets from the earliest times lived in societies (1 Sam. x. 5), and as members of such societies were called *sons of the prophets*. They were numerous and were to be found at Gilgal, Beth-el, Jericho, and probably other places.

4. *Jericho*] Cp. 1 K. xvi. 34, note.

7 thee. And they two went on. And fifty men of the sons
of the prophets went, and stood over against them afar off:
8 and they two stood by Jordan. And Elijah took his mantle,
and wrapped it together, and smote the waters, and they
were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over
9 on dry ground. And it came to pass, ¹when they were gone
over, that Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for
thee, before I be taken from thee. And Elisha said, I pray
10 thee, let ²a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And
he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: *nevertheless*, if thou
see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee;
11 but if not, it shall not be so. And it came to pass, as they
still went on, and talked, that, behold, *there appeared* ³a
chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which parted them both
asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.
12 And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the
⁴chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof! And he saw

¹ Or, *as they went*
Deut. xxi. 17

² That is, the portion of the firstborn. See
³ Or, *chariots*

⁴ Or, *chariot*

8. *mantle*] Cp. i. 8, note.

on dry ground] 'The depth of the water [in the river Jordan] varies greatly with the seasons. In autumn there are numerous fords. One of the most famous is that near the mouth of the *Wady el-Kelt*... It is the bathing place of the pilgrims' (*Baedeker*, p. 169). The ford alluded to by *Baedeker* is near Jericho, but the account given here excludes the use of any ford.

9. *a double portion of thy spirit*] See marg. Elisha claims the privilege of the firstborn of Elijah's spiritual sons. Targ. ...*of thy spirit of prophecy*.

10. *if thou see me*] Elisha will receive a sign to shew him whether his petition is granted or not.

it shall be so unto thee] Better, *may it be so unto thee!* It is a blessing, not a promise.

11. *a chariot*] Better as marg., *chariots*.

by a whirlwind] Cp. Ezek. i. 4.

12. *My father...the horsemen thereof*] These are the very words addressed to Elisha himself on his death-bed by Joash king of Israel (xiii. 14). Their appropriateness as addressed to Elisha is obvious; the help he gave to his countrymen against Syria was worth many chariots and horsemen to Israel. Cp. vi. 8—vii. 20; xiii. 14—19. On the other hand it is not clear in what sense they can apply to Elijah, who appears solely as the denouncer of the evil deeds of the kings of Israel. It may be that the original text of this verse had only, *My father, my*

him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah ¹³ that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan. And he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from ¹⁴ him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the LORD, ¹ the God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they were divided hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were ¹⁵ at Jericho over against him saw him, they said, The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him. And they ¹⁶ said unto him, Behold now, there be with thy servants fifty strong men; let them go, we pray thee, and seek thy master: lest peradventure the spirit of the LORD hath taken him up, and cast him upon some mountain, or into some valley. And he said, Ye shall not send. And when they urged him ¹⁷ till he was ashamed, he said, Send. They sent therefore fifty men; and they sought three days, but found him not. And they came back to him, while he tarried at Jericho; ¹⁸ and he said unto them, Did I not say unto you, Go not?

And the men of the city said unto Elisha, Behold, we ¹⁹

¹ Or, *the God of Elijah, even he? and when he had smitten &c.*

father as Elisha's exclamation, and that the remaining words were introduced by a very early transcriber from xiii. 14.

13—25. THE ACTS OF ELISHA.

13. *He took up also*] Rather, **And he lifted on high**; LXX. καὶ ὑψωσεν. It was a mute appeal to God by a significant action to fulfil Elijah's prayer for him that he might receive a double portion of Elijah's spirit. He has seen his master taken from him, and he holds up the mantle in testimony of the fact, and he 'offers' it to God, before he takes it as the badge of his new office. The same Heb. word *hērīm* (a hiphil) is used Exod. xxxv. 24; Num. xv. 19. From the same root comes *ērūmāh*, 'heave-offering,' properly, an offering which was *lifted up* for presentation.

14. *Where is the LORD*] Thus translated the words seem an utterance of despair; probably however LXX. (A) is right in translating, *Where, O Lord* or *By which way, O Lord?* As the prophet speaks the river is divided and yields him passage.

15. *doth rest*] The same Heb. word as in Isa. xi. 2.

16. *the spirit of the LORD hath taken him up*] Cp. 1 K. xviii. 12; Ezek. iii. 14, 15; Acts viii. 39. Elijah's appearances and disappearances were sudden; might not the prophet be found again if the search were thorough?

- pray thee, the situation of this city is pleasant, as my lord seeth: but the water is naught, and the land ¹miscarrieth.
- 20 And he said, Bring me a new cruse, and put salt therein.
- 21 And they brought it to him. And he went forth unto the spring of the waters, and cast salt therein, and said, Thus saith the LORD, I have healed these waters; there shall not
- 22 be from thence any more death or ²miscarrying. So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the word of Elisha which he spake.
- 23 And he went up from thence unto Beth-el: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth ³little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up,
- 24 thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. And he looked behind him and saw them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came forth two she-bears out of the
- 25 wood, and tare forty and two children of them. And he went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria.

¹ Or, casteth her fruit

² Or, casting of fruit

³ Or, young lads

19. *the water is naught*] Better, *the water is bad*. The whole Jordan Valley is the ancient basin of a vast inland lake, of which the Dead (Salt) Sea is the survival. Brackish water is found at many points throughout its length. The *Ain-es-Sultan* to the N.W. of the present village of Jericho is traditionally identified with the spring healed by Elisha. The immediate neighbourhood of Jericho is fertile even now, but beyond nearly all is barren (*Baudeker*, p. 165; G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*, p. 79, note).

the land miscarrieth] Either, as marg., *the land casteth her fruit*, or, the reference is to the inhabitants of the land, among whom still-birth was common.

20. *salt*] The most unlikely means. So our Lord used clay to anoint the eyes of a blind man (John ix. 6).

23. *Beth-el*] Where there was another colony of 'the sons of the prophets' (v. 3).

bald head] A cutting of the hair on certain parts of the head was a sign of mourning in ancient Israel and the surrounding peoples. Cp. Isa. iii. 24; xv. 2; xxii. 12; Amos viii. 10. Elisha no doubt performed this cutting in mourning for Elijah. In Deut. xiv. 1 this ceremony is forbidden, but the prohibition was certainly not obeyed in early Israel, as the passages quoted above from Isaiah shew.

25. *mount Carmel*] This was a spot favoured by Elijah his master. Cp. 1 K. xviii. 19.

to Samaria] According to v. 1 he started not from Samaria, but from *Gilgal*. He had a house in Samaria (vi. 24, 32).

Now Jehoram the son of Ahab began to reign over 3 Israel in Samaria in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah, and reigned twelve years. And he did that which 2 was evil in the sight of the LORD; but not like his father, and like his mother: for he put away the 'pillar of Baal that his father had made. Nevertheless he cleaved unto the 3 sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom.

¹ Or, *obelisk*

CH. III. 1—3. THE REIGN OF JEHORAM.

1. *the son of Ahab*] He was brother of his immediate predecessor, Ahaziah. Cp. 1. 17.

2. *he did that which was evil*] Cp. what is said of Ahaziah (1 K. xxii. 52).

pillar] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 23, note. LXX. has pl. τὰς στήλας.

had made] Rather, *had prepared*. A monolith could not be 'made.'

3. *he cleaved*] This preterite is found also in Job xxix. 10, but *clave* (xviii. 6) is the usual form. Cp. *shined* (Job xxix. 3) for *shone*.

the sins] i.e. the golden calves. Cp. Deut. ix. 21; Amos viii. 14. The writer will not say, 'the gods.' See 1 K. xvi. 13, note.

4—27. THE MOABITE WAR.

In 1868 a stone monument was discovered in the land of Moab written in the name of Mesha, giving an account of a successful revolt against Israel. The stone was broken up by the Arabs after its discovery, and so the reading of many words is uncertain, but the general purport is quite clear. Beginning with the words 'I Mesha son of Chemoshmelech (or Chemoshgad) king of Moab the Dibonite' (Isa. xv. 2), it proceeds to say that 'because Chemosh (1 K. xi. 7; note) was angry with his land,' Omri king of Israel 'took possession of all the land of Medeba' (Num. xxi. 29, 30) and Israel dwelt in it 'his days and half his son's days, even forty years.' 'But,' continues Mesha, 'in my days Chemosh restored it, and I built Baal-meon.' The inscription ends with a story of the taking of cities from Israel, Ataroth and Nebo (Num. xxxii. 3), and Jahaz (Isa. xv. 4), and with the building of a city called *Kirhah* and others. There appears to be also an allusion to the sheep, which formed so important a part of the wealth of Moab. See Hastings' *Dictionary* iii. 404—8 for an illustration and full text.

Mesha's story may be briefly summed up: (1) Moab being in servitude to Omri and for a time to Ahab, (2) revolts during the latter's reign under the leadership of Mesha, and (3) pursues an unbroken course of successes against Israel.

The summary of events as given in Kings is different in important respects: (1) Mesha of Moab being in servitude to Israel, (2) revolts on

4 Now Mesha king of Moab was a sheepmaster; and he rendered unto the king of Israel 'the wool of an hundred thousand lambs, and of an hundred thousand rams. But it came to pass, when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. And king Jehoram went out of Samaria at that time, and mustered all Israel.

¹ Or, *an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool*

the death of Ahab; (3) Jehoram of Israel, narrowly escaping disaster, lays Moab waste, and shuts up the king of Moab in Kir; but (4) 'great wrath' comes upon Israel and the host retires from Moab. The accounts agree as to the servitude of Moab in Ahab's reign, and as to the name of the revolted Moabite king. The successes which Mesha claims receive a general acknowledgement in the statement of Kings that *the king of Moab rebelled*. The temporary success of Jehoram is omitted on the Moabite stone, either because the stone was put up before his expedition, or because the success was only temporary. It is possible that some of Mesha's achievements are hinted at in the mention of the 'great wrath' which came upon Israel (*v.* 27).

4, 5. REVOLT OF MOAB.

4. *a sheepmaster*] The same word in the plural is translated 'herdmen' in Amos i. 1. The word is used only in these two places, and its precise meaning is uncertain.

rendered] i.e. paid as tribute. Cp. xvii. 3 (same Heb. word).

the wool of &c.] Marg. *an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool* (so also A.V.). If 100,000 rams had been taken yearly from Mesha, he could not have long remained a sheepmaster. Moab is well watered and has much grass for flocks. Cp. Num. xxxii. 1—4.

5. *when Ahab was dead*] This statement agrees fairly well with Mesha's reckoning on his monument that Israel oppressed Moab in the days of Omri and 'his son' (Ahab) for 40 years. If we assign Omri 12 years (1 K. xvi. 23) and Ahab 22 years, the total might be counted at 40, a favourite round number in Palestine. If however we accept Mesha's further statement that the forty years were coextensive with the reign of Omri and *half* the reign of Ahab, we have to reject the length of the two reigns as stated in Kings and also the statement of Kings that Ahab's death was the signal for the revolt of Moab.

6—8. JEHOSHAPHAT JOINS JEHORAM IN HIS CAMPAIGN AGAINST MOAB.

6. *at that time*] At the time when he first heard the news; so we must understand the words if the text is complete, but it may be that they refer to a context which is now lost.

And he went and sent to Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, 7 saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle? And he said, I will go up: I am as thou art, my people as thy people, my horses as thy horses. And he said, Which way shall we 8 go up? And he answered, The way of the wilderness of Edom. So the king of Israel went, and the king of Judah, 9 and the king of Edom: and they made a circuit of seven

7. *And he went*] i.e. started on the march. In starting from Samaria the Israelite army would march southward and approach the border of Judah. Perhaps the message to Jehoshaphat was sent from the neighbourhood of Jericho, for as Moab lay east of the Dead Sea, Jericho was one obvious base for a campaign against the Moabites.

I am as thou art] Cp. 1 K. xxii. 4.

8. *And he said*] The king of Israel makes the enquiry of his ally and of his officers, not of Jehoshaphat only.

And he answered] The subject is indefinite, 'and one answered' or 'and one said.' There is no reason to suppose that this was the answer of Jehoshaphat only. Indeed there is nothing to shew even that he agreed with the suggestion.

The way of the wilderness of Edom] The more obvious line of advance lay eastward to the fords of the Jordan, and then south-eastwards into the heart of Moab. But three reasons might be suggested against following this route: (1) at some periods of the year the Jordan is a formidable obstacle for an army to cross¹; (2) the Moabites would expect to be attacked on this line; (3) no pressure could be exerted on the king of Edom, if Moab were approached from the north. The line chosen however was one which ran due south, until the southern end of the Dead Sea was past, and then turned north-eastwards into Moab. The advantages of this route were: (1) there was no great river to cross; (2) the most fertile part of the land of Moab was vulnerable from the south; (3) it was possible to overawe Edom on the way. *Wilderness* of course means only open country affording pasturage for flocks, not desert. The army would however pass through some desolate tracts on the way, e.g. the well-known Valley of Salt (deservedly so called) at the south end of the Dead Sea.

9-20. THE DISTRESS OF THE ARMY AND THE INTERVENTION OF ELISHA.

9. *the king of Edom*] Edom had recently secured autonomy, for during the reign of Jehoshaphat she had been governed by a deputy of the Jewish king (1 K. xxii. 47).

¹ 'In April it is on an average 100 feet wide....In autumn there are numerous fords' (*Baedeker*, p. 169).

days' journey: and there was no water for the host, nor
 10 for the beasts that followed them. And the king of Israel
 said, Alas! for the LORD hath called these three kings
 11 together to deliver them into the hand of Moab. But
 Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the LORD,
 that we may inquire of the LORD by him? And one of the
 king of Israel's servants answered and said, Elisha the son
 of Shaphat is here, which poured water on the hands of
 12 Elijah. And Jehoshaphat, said, The word of the LORD
 is with him. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the
 13 king of Edom went down to him. And Elisha said unto the
 king of Israel, What have I to do with thee? get thee to the
 prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother.
 And the king of Israel said unto him, Nay: for the LORD
 hath called these three kings together to deliver them into
 14 the hand of Moab. And Elisha said, As the LORD of hosts
 liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard
 the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not

seven days' journey] For modern travellers it is a ride of 15 hours from Hebron to Jebel Usdum, and 15 additional hours from Jebel Usdum to El-Kerak¹ (*Baedeker*, p. 144). An army would travel much more slowly.

there was no water] Perhaps rather, *there had been no water*. For seven days the army had been obliged to depend on the water it brought with it.

10. *the LORD hath called*] Compare the words of the same king on a later occasion, *This evil is of the LORD; why should I wait for the LORD any longer?* (vi. 33). He ignores Elisha on this occasion as in the incident of Naaman (v. 6—8). Jehoram was little open to religious influences, but quite ready to attribute misfortunes to the God of Israel.

11. *Jehoshaphat said*] Cp. 1 K. xxii. 5, 7.

poured water] An Eastern does not dip his hands into water to wash, but has water poured over his hands by a servant.

12. *went down*] The tents of the three kings would be pitched in the highest part of the camp in order to overlook it.

13. *to the prophets of thy mother*] We may gather from this that Jehoram had not yet broken with the worship of Baal. The act referred to in *v. 2* probably followed this deliverance granted through Elisha.

Nay: for &c.] The king deprecates being reproached with his unfaithfulness to JEHOVAH at such a time of crisis.

¹ Identified with some probability with Kir-hareseth (*v. 25*).

look toward thee, nor see thee. But now bring me a 15
 minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played,
 that the hand of the LORD came upon him. And he said, 16
 Thus saith the LORD, Make this valley full of trenches. For 17
 thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not see wind, neither
 shall ye see rain, yet that valley shall be filled with water:
 and ye shall drink, both ye and your cattle and your beasts.
 And this is but a light thing in the sight of the LORD: he 18
 will also deliver the Moabites into your hand. And ye shall 19
 smite every fenced city, and every choice city, and shall fell
 every good tree, and stop all fountains of water, and mar
 every good piece of land with stones. And it came to pass 20
 in the morning, about the time of offering the oblation, that,

15. *a minstrel*] Cp. 1 Sam. x. 5. On this last passage the great Hebrew teacher Maimonides remarks: 'Prophecy dwells neither amid melancholy, nor amid apathy, but amid joyfulness.'

it came to pass] The tense in Hebrew is frequentative; it describes what usually happened with Elisha, and not what happened on this occasion only.

16. *Make...full of trenches*] A test of faith, for the work was laborious.

valley] Rather, *ravine*; Heb. *nahal*, LXX. *χευδρρον*. Cp. 1 K. xvii. 3.

17. *see wind*] The reference is to the clouds brought in Palestine by west and south-west winds.

19. *And ye shall smite*] The message from the LORD passes into the prophet's own exhortations. *v. 17* is a simple utterance of a Divine word ('Thus saith the Lord'); *v. 18* is a summary in the prophet's own words; *v. 19* is the prophet's own in expression and probably also in substance. The charge to *fell every good tree* is at variance with the law of Deuteronomy (Deut. xx. 19), but it was a practice of ancient war; Shalmaneser II. for instance boasts that he besieged Hazael in Damascus, and *cut down his plantations*. The severity of Elisha's counsels is to be explained partly from the sternness of his own character, and partly from the severity of the measures taken against Israel by Mesha in his revolt. The Moabite king 'devoted' the Israelite inhabitants of Nebo to Chemosh, i.e. utterly destroyed them.

20. *the oblation*] The reference is to the daily morning sacrifice (Ezek. xlvi. 13—15); there was also a daily evening sacrifice (1 K. xviii. 29, note). The law regarding this daily sacrifice ('The continual burnt offering') is found in Exod. xxix. 38—42.

¹ Cp. Josh. vi. 17 ff.

behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the
 21 country was filled with water. Now when all the Moabites
 heard that the kings were come up to fight against them,
 they ¹gathered themselves together, all that were able to
²put on armour, and upward, and stood on the border.
 22 And they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone
 upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water over against
 23 them as red as blood: and they said, This is blood;
 the kings ³are surely destroyed, and they have smitten each
 24 man his fellow: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil. And
 when they came to the camp of Israel, the Israelites rose up
 and smote the Moabites, so that they fled before them: and
 they went forward ⁴into the land smiting the Moabites.

¹ Or, were called together ² Heb. gird themselves with a girdle

³ Or, have surely fought together ⁴ Heb. into it

by the way of Edom] Though Edom is now almost wholly desert, it was not so in ancient times (Gen. xxvii. 39). Between Jebel Usdum and Petra many springs (some slightly salt) are mentioned by Baedeker (*Palestine*, pp. 149, 150). The streams fed by these run into the Dead Sea; and by their means no doubt the army of Jehoram was saved from perishing by thirst.

21—27. THE CAMPAIGN ENDS IN THE RETREAT OF ISRAEL.

21. *gathered themselves together*] Marg., *were called together*, i.e. by messengers and by the blowing of horns. Cp. 1 Sam. xiii. 3, 4 (A.V.).
that were able to put on armour] Better, **that wore a sword-belt**. Cp. marg. Vulg. *qui accincti erant balteo*. The phrase is equivalent to *that drew sword* (v. 26). These were the pick of the army.

and upward] A phrase equivalent to *et ceteri*. Bowmen, clubmen, and boys. Every possible fighter was needed.

22. *red as blood*] Near the south end of the Dead Sea the soil is reddish through the waste of the red sandstone rocks from which *Edom* ('red') is supposed to take its name.

23. *are surely destroyed*] Better as marg., **have surely fought together**. The expression however is rare, and we cannot be sure that the text is correct.

24. *the Israelites rose up*] The phrase suggests that Jehoram had contrived to give the camp a deserted look, as though his army had fled. Cp. vii. 12.

they went forward into the land] The translation suits the context, for the battle was 'on the border' (v. 21), but the Heb. text is again doubtful.

And they beat down the cities; and on every good piece 25
of land they cast every man his stone, and filled it; and
they stopped all the fountains of water, and felled all the
good trees: until in Kir-hareseth *only* they left the stones
thereof; howbeit the slingers went about it, and smote it.
And when the king of Moab saw that the battle was too sore 26
for him, he took with him seven hundred men that drew
sword, to break through unto the king of Edom: but they
could not. Then he took his eldest son that should have 27
reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering
upon the wall. And there was great wrath against Israel:
and they departed from him, and returned to their own
land.

Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the 4
sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my

¹ Or, *there came great wrath upon Israel*

25. *on every good piece of land they cast every man his stone*] In Palestine in hilly districts the land is terraced with stones, and divisions between properties are marked by stone-walls, so that the destruction of the terraces and of the walls would suffice to ruin the land to a great extent for agriculture. The desolation of the country near Jerusalem, as the writer of these notes saw it in 1895, is largely due to the ruin (accidental or intentional) of the terraces.

Kir-hareseth] Isa. xvi. 7. It is probably the *Kir of Moab* mentioned in Isa. xv. 1 and the *Kir-heres* of Isa. xvi. 11. It is commonly identified with the modern *el-Kerak*, near the south end of the Dead Sea eastward.

26. *unto the king of Edom*] A bitter feud between Edom and Moab seems to have started from this war. Amos (ii. 1) more than a hundred years later denounces Moab for burning the bones of the king of Edom on some unrecorded occasion.

27. *his eldest son*] Cp. Mic. vi. 7.

upon the wall] In order that foe as well as friend might know how strenuously he was working to secure the favour of Chemosh.

there was great wrath against Israel] Rather as marg., *there came great wrath upon Israel*. The reference is to the wrath of JEHOVAH manifesting itself in various calamities. Cp. Num. xvi. 46 [xvii. 11, Heb.]; 2 Chr. xix. 2.

departed from him] The Israelite army believing themselves to be under Divine displeasure, owing probably to an outbreak of plague or some unrecorded disaster, gave up the attempt to reduce the Moabites to submission and retired to their own country.

IV. 1—VIII. 15. THE ACTS OF ELISHA.

This long section tells us little or nothing of the history of Israel. The king of Israel (probably Jehoram) is never mentioned by name;

husband is dead: and thou knowest that thy servant did
 2 fear the LORD: and the creditor is come to take unto him
 my two children to be bondmen. And Elisha said unto
 her, What shall I do for thee? tell me; what hast thou
 in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not
 3 any thing in the house, save a pot of oil. Then he said, Go,
 borrow thee vessels abroad of all thy neighbours, even empty
 4 vessels; borrow not a few. And thou shalt go in, and shut
 the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and pour out into
 all those vessels; and thou shalt set aside that which is full.
 5 So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and
 upon her sons; they brought *the vessels* to her, and she
 6 poured out. And it came to pass, when the vessels were
 full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And
 he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil
 7 stayed. Then she came and told the man of God. And
 he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and
 thy sons of the rest.

8 And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where
 the prophet is the centre of all action. The source from which these
 narratives are derived is probably a life of Elisha, and not a book of
 royal chronicles.

CH. IV. 1-7. THE WIDOW'S OIL.

1. *the creditor is come*] A poor debtor in Israel sometimes sold his children, or was compelled to sell himself into service. Cp. Exod. xxi. 7; Lev. xxv. 39; Neh. v. 4, 5; Matt. xviii. 25. The creditor in this narrative claims a right given by custom.

4. *pour out*] The woman is to pour out the oil she already has into the borrowed vessels. The Peshitta (best MSS.) represents the matter differently: *pour into all these vessels water, and bring up the full vessel to me.* According to this translation the miracle consists in a change of water into oil as the vessels are brought before the prophet.

6. *the oil stayed*] The amount of oil given corresponds with the obedient energy of the woman in borrowing vessels. So in xiii. 18, 19 ('he smote thrice, and stayed') the number of victories granted to Israel over Syria corresponds to the number of times the king of Israel struck the ground with his arrows. Both incidents tell of a testing of faith; to both the king and the woman it happens according to the energy of their faith.

8-17. THE HOSPITALITY OF THE WOMAN OF SHUNEM.

8. *Shunem*] A few miles north of Jezreel on the northern border of the 'great plain' of Jezreel. It belonged to the tribe of Issachar

was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread. And she said unto her husband, 9 Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make, I pray thee, 10 a little chamber ¹on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither. And it fell on a day, that he came thither, and he 11 turned into the chamber and lay there. And he said to 12 Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him. And he said unto him, 13 Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast ²been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, I dwell among mine own people. And he said, What then is to be done for her? And 14 Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no son, and her husband is old. And he said, Call her. And when he had called 15

¹ Or, with walls

² Cr, shewed us all this reverence

(Josh. xix. 18); the Philistines pitched there before the battle of Gilboa (1 Sam. xxviii. 4). It is represented by the modern Sülem (Solam).

a great woman] Great means *wealthy* as in 1 Sam. xxv. 2; 2 Sam. xix. 32; owing to her great position in Shunem she was known simply as *the Shunammite* (vv. 12, 25, 36).

10. *on the wall*] Better as marg., *with walls*. She proposes to build a permanent chamber, and not a mere booth.

a table] Heb. *shulhān*. The exact nature of this piece of furniture is not known. The Heb. word means something *spread out*, so that the original *shulhān* may have been, like the Arabic *sofra*, simply a skin spread out on the ground. The tables used by the modern fellahin of Palestine are however flat-topped stands, 'mostly round, and rarely more than twelve inches high.' Those who eat from them sit on the floor. See A. Macalister, TABLE, in *Hastings' Dictionary*.

a candlestick] Rather, a *lampstand*; LXX. *λυχνία* (Matt. v. 15).
12. *she stood before him*] As ready to wait upon him. Cp. 1 K. x. 8, note.

13. *I dwell among mine own people*] Cp. viii. 1; 3, note. This phrase implies safety and honour and ease. Compare the splendid description of 'dwelling at home' given in Job xxxi. The Shunammite refuses all reward, and departs. Elisha then consults Gehazi.

16 her, she stood in the door. And he said, At this season, when the time ¹cometh round, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie
 17 unto thine handmaid. And the woman conceived, and bare a son at that season, when the time came round, as Elisha
 18 had said unto her. And when the child was grown, it fell
 19 on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers. And he said unto his father, My head, my head. And he said
 20 to his servant, Carry him to his mother. And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her
 21 knees till noon, and then died. And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut *the door* upon
 22 him, and went out. And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the servants, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come
 23 again. And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to-day? it is neither new moon nor sabbath. And she said, ²It shall
 24 be well. Then she saddled an ass, and said to her servant, Drive, and go forward; slacken me not the riding, except I

¹ Heb. *liveth, or, reviveth*

² Heb. *Peace*

15. *she stood in the door*] Shewing her unwillingness to entertain the suggestion of any reward; contrast the expression used in v. 12, 'she stood before him.'

16. *when the time cometh round*] Cp. Gen. xviii. 10.

18—37. THE RAISING OF THE SHUNAMMITE'S SON TO LIFE.

The child, when old enough to walk, slips away from his mother to join his father in the harvest field, and is struck down by the hot sunshine.

21. *shut the door upon him*] Apparently she kept his death a secret from her husband.

22. *that I may run...and come again*] The distance from Shunem to the nearest point of Mount Carmel, as the crow flies, is about 15 miles; the journey of the Shunammite was therefore of about 20 miles—four hours perhaps.

23. *new moon...sabbath*] Cp. Num. xxviii. 9, 11; Isa. i. 13. Carmel was a centre of worship; an altar of the LORD stood there of old (1 K. xviii. 30).

It shall be well] The Heb. word, *Shālôm*, 'peace' is used as an exclamation, and may be differently translated, e.g. in v. 26, 'It is well'; in v. 22; 2 Sam. xviii. 28, 'All is well.'

bid thee. So she went, and came unto the man of God to 25
 mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God
 saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold,
 yonder is the Shunammite: run, I pray thee, now to meet 26
 her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with
 thy husband? is it well with the child? And she answered,
 It is well. And when she came to the man of God to the 27
 hill, she caught hold of his feet. And Gehazi came near to
 thrust her away; but the man of God said, Let her alone:
 for her soul is vexed within her; and the LORD hath hid it
 from me, and hath not told me. Then she said, Did I desire a 28
 son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me? Then he 29
 said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine
 hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not;
 and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my
 staff upon the face of the child. And the mother of the 30
 child said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will
 not leave thee. And he arose, and followed her. And 31
 Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the
 face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor hearing.
 Wherefore he returned to meet him, and told him, saying,
 The child is not awaked. And when Elisha was come into 32
 the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his
 bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them 33
 twain, and prayed unto the LORD. And he went up, and 34

¹ Heb. *bitter*

² Heb. *attention*

26. *she answered, It is well*] She will tell no one, but Elisha himself.

27. *she caught hold of (clung to) his feet*] Her action expressed her resolve that he should not move, until she had opened all her heart to him. Cp. v. 30.

29. *take my staff*] Elisha expresses by a symbol his determination to come himself. There is nothing to shew that he expected a wonder to be wrought by means of the staff, as by Moses' rod (Exod. vii. 19).

salute him not] Cp. our Lord's direction to the Seventy in Luke x. 4. Eastern salutations are formal and ceremonious quite different in character from the (often hasty) greetings of the West.

31. *The child is not awaked*] Gehazi speaks as one who had expected the staff to work a wonder.

33. *shut the door*] He shut out weeping, and shut in prayer.
prayed] As Elijah over the son of the widow of Zarephath (1 K. xvii. 21).

lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon him; and the flesh of the child
 35 waxed warm. Then he returned, and walked in the house once to and fro; and went up, and stretched himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child
 36 opened his eyes. And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was
 37 come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son. Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground; and she took up her son, and went out.

38 And Elisha came again to Gilgal: and there was a dearth in the land; and the sons of the prophets were sitting before him: and he said unto his servant, Set on the great pot, and seethe pottage for the sons of the
 39 prophets. And one went out into the field to gather herbs, and found a wild vine, and gathered thereof wild gourds his lap full, and came and shred them into the pot of
 40 pottage: for they knew them not. So they poured out for the men to eat. And it came to pass, as they were eating of the pottage, that they cried out, and said, O man of God,

¹ Or, bowed himself

² Or, and embraced the child

34. lay upon the child] Elijah in like manner 'stretched himself upon the child.'

stretched himself] Rather as marg., bowed himself, i.e. in the attitude of earnest supplication; the same Heb. word is used in 1 K. xviii. 42.

35. and the child sneezed] The meaning of the Heb. expression is very doubtful.

38—44. ELISHA AT GILGAL DURING THE DEARTH.

38. Gilgal] Cp. ii. 1, note.

pottage] Cp. Gen. xxv. 29, 34.

39. a wild vine] Vulg. *quasi vitem siluestrem*, 'as it were a wild vine.' The plant, according to the description of the finder, resembled an untrained vine. In some English dialects a *vine* means "any trailing plant, esp. a fruit-bearing one" (J. Wright, *s.v.*).

wild gourds] Probably the fruit of *Citrullus Colocynthis*, a slender scabrous plant bearing as fruit a gourd of the size and shape of an orange. The pulp of this has an intensely bitter taste, which would suggest poison to the Hebrews. Cp. Deut. xxxii. 32, 33; and the article WILD GOURDS by N. McLean in *Encyclopaedia Biblica*.

there is death in the pot. And they could not eat thereof. But he said, Then bring meal. And he cast it into the pot; ⁴¹ and he said, Pour out for the people, that they may eat. And there was no ¹harm in the pot.

And there came a man from Baal-shalishah, and brought ⁴² the man of God bread of the firstfruits, twenty loaves of barley, and fresh ears of corn in ²his sack. And he said, Give unto the people, that they may eat. And his ³servant ⁴³ said, What, should I set this before an hundred men? But he said, Give the people, that they may eat; for thus saith the LORD, They shall eat, and shall leave thereof. So he ⁴⁴ set it before them, and they did eat, and left thereof, according to the word of the LORD.

Now Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, ⁵ was a great man ⁴with his master, and honourable, because by him the LORD had given ⁵victory unto Syria: he was

¹ Heb. *evil thing* ² Or, *the husk thereof* ³ Or, *minister*
⁴ Heb. *before* ⁵ Heb. *salvation*

^{41.} *and he said, Pour out*] The words according to LXX. are spoken to Gehazi, for the imperative is in the singular; above ('bring meal') the plural is used.

^{42.} *Baal-shalishah*] 'Bethsaris' (so named in LXX.) is described by Eusebius in his *Onomasticon* as a village fifteen (Roman) miles north of Diospolis (Lydda) *in regione Thammitica*, i.e. on the western side of Mount Ephraim. If we accept this identification, we should also identify the *Gilgal* of v. 38 with the western site mentioned in the note on ii. 1.

firstfruits] Cp. Exod. xxiii. 19; xxxiv. 26. Such an offering was an appropriate one to make to a prophet.

fresh ears of corn] LXX. *καλάθας*, 'cakes of preserved fruit.' The meaning of the Hebrew is uncertain, and the text doubtful.

in his sack] Vulg. *in pera sua*, 'in his wallet'; Pesh. *in his garment*. The meaning of the Heb. word is doubtful.

^{43.} *his servant*] Cp. 1 K. x. 5.

thus saith the LORD] In this incident (vv. 42—44) a supernatural intervention is clearly recognised; the preceding incident (vv. 38—41) however stands on a different footing, and may be construed as a natural event.

CH. V. THE LÉPROSY OF NAAMAN.

1—7. NAAMAN SENT TO THE KING OF ISRAEL.

1. *honourable*] Lit. *one whose face (or person) was accepted*. He was favoured by his king.

2 also a mighty man of valour, *but he was* a leper. And the
 Syrians had gone out in bands, and had brought away
 captive out of the land of Israel a little maid; and she
 3 waited on Naaman's wife. And she said unto her mistress,
 Would God my lord were ²with the prophet that is in
 4 Samaria! then would he recover him of his leprosy. And
³one went in, and told his lord, saying, Thus and thus said
 5 the maid that is of the land of Israel. And the king of
 Syria said, Go to, go, and I will send a letter unto the king
 of Israel. And he departed, and took with him ten talents
 of silver, and six thousand ⁴pieces of gold, and ten changes
 6 of raiment. And he brought the letter to the king of Israel,
 saying, And now when this letter is come unto thee, behold,
 I have sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest

¹ Heb. *was before*

² Heb. *before*

³ Or, *he*

⁴ Or, *shekels*

2. *in bands*] Heb. *g'dūdim*. LXX. *μὲνδρωτοι*, 'lightly armed' as robbers or liers in wait; Vulg. *latrunculi*. Cp. Gen. xlix. 19, R.V. marg.

3. *with the prophet*] LXX. (Lucian) adds *and would entreat him*. In the little maid's eyes the prophet is greater than the captain of the host; her suggestion is that Naaman should seek Elisha's presence.

recover] i.e. cure. Aldis Wright, *Bible Word-Book* (1884), quotes Shakespeare, *Tempest*, II. 2. 97, 'If all the wine in my bottle will recover him, I will help his ague.'

4. *one went in*] Better as marg., *he* (Naaman) *went in*; so Vulg. *told his lord*] i.e. told the king of Syria.

5. *ten talents of silver*] A. R. S. Kennedy in his article WEIGHTS AND MEASURES, *Hastings' Dictionary* IV. 902-6, concludes that there is evidence in the Old Testament for reckoning by three distinct units of weight, the Babylonian shekel of 252 grains, the new Syrian of 320 grains, and the Phœnician of 224 grains, each with its corresponding light shekel of 126, 160, and 112 grains respectively. The Babylonian talent contained certainly 3600 shekels, the new Syrian and the Phœnician each probably 3000 shekels. We have a choice therefore in the present passage of six different estimates of the value of the talent. If we take the intermediate estimate, that supplied by the Babylonian standard, the talent, if 'heavy,' weighed somewhat more than a cwt. avoirdupois.

ten changes of raiment] *Ten* is perhaps a round number here as in xiii. 7; Gen. xxiv. 55; xxxi. 7. For *changes of raiment* cp. Jud. xiv. 12.

6. *And now*] This opening presupposes that the ordinary greetings have been given.

recover him of his leprosy. And it came to pass, when the 7
king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes,
and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this
man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy?
but consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh ¹a quarrel
against me. And it was so, when Elisha the man of God 8
heard that the king of Israel had rent his clothes, that he
sent to the king, saying, Wherefore hast thou rent thy
clothes? let him come now to me, and he shall know that
there is a prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with his 9
horses and with his chariots, and stood at the door of the
house of Elisha. And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, 10
saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh
shall come again to thee, and ²thou shalt be clean. But 11
Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold,
I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand,
and call on the name of the LORD his God, and wave his
hand over the place, and recover the leper. Are not 12

¹ Or, an occasion

² Heb. *be thou clean*

7. *rent his clothes*] As at the receipt of bad news. Cp. xix. 1.
seeketh a quarrel] Quarrel is here used in the sense of *querela*, 'a
cause of complaint.' Cp. Col. iii. 13, 'if any man have a quarrel
against any,' A. V.

8—19. THE HEALING OF NAAMAN'S LEPROSY.

8. *he shall know*] Cp. Ezek. ii. 5.

9. *with his horses and with his chariots*] Nothing abated of his
state, certainly not standing before the prophet, as the little maid
pictured in v. 3.

10. *Go and wash in Jordan seven times*] A severe test of obedience.
If Elisha was dwelling in Samaria or in the western Gilgal (cp. ii. 1,
note), he sends Naaman a journey of some twenty miles without even
seeing him. The sevenfold bathing in Jordan adds to the severity of
the test. If Naaman thought to be cured as a matter of course, because
his king was more powerful than the king of Israel, he was completely
undecided. Elisha shews no respect of persons.

thou shalt be clean] Heb. *be thou clean*. For the imperative cp.
Mark i. 41; vii. 34; John v. 8. The word of healing is not a
promise, but a *fiat*.

11. *and stand*] The attitude of prayer.

over the place] i.e. over the part of the body specially affected by the
disease; LXX. 'he will put his hand upon the place.' The Jewish
commentator Ralbag however explains the phrase as meaning *towards*
the place where Elisha worshipped JEHOVAH.

'Abanah and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? may I not wash in them, and be clean? So he turned and went away in a rage. And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean? Then went he down, and dipped *himself* seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. And he returned to the man of God, he and all his company, and came, and stood before him: and he said, Behold now, I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel: now therefore, I pray thee, take a ²present of thy servant. But he said, As the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused. And Naaman said, If not, yet I pray thee let there be given to thy servant two mules' burden of earth; for thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the LORD. In this thing the LORD pardon thy servant; when my master goeth

¹ Another reading is, *Amanah*

² Heb. *blessing*

12. *Abanah*] This form, which is supported by LXX. and Vulg., is the 'written' text, the *Kethib*; the *Qeri* or 'read' text has *Amanah*. The chief river of Damascus at the present day is the Baradā, the Chrysorrhoeas of the Greeks. South of this the plain of Damascus is crossed by many streams, one of which, the al-Awaj, is usually identified with the Pharpar. These waters give a wonderful fertility and beauty to the neighbourhood.

13. *My father*] One speaks for the rest. For the title *father* cp. ii. 12; vi. 21; Gen. xlv. 8.

14. *and stood before him*] He does not on this occasion expect the prophet to come out, but he himself goes in and stands before the prophet as in the presence of a superior.

a present] Heb. *a blessing*, i.e. *a thank-offering*.

16. *but he refused*] Elisha by his previous action (v. 10) taught Naaman that the healing grace of the God of Israel is not controlled by respect of persons; he now teaches that it is not exercised for money.

17. *two mules' burden of earth*] With which to erect an altar (Exod. xx. 24). He had formerly despised the waters of Israel; he now desires its dust and stones. The request may seem superstitious, but the Israelite altar would serve as a memorial of his cure, and the sight of it would steady his new-found loyalty to JEHOVAH, whenever he felt the attraction of the House of Rimmon.

into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, when I bow myself in the house of Rimmon, the LORD pardon thy servant in this thing. And he said unto him, 19 Go in peace. So he departed from him ¹a little way.

But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, 20 Behold, my master hath spared this Naaman the Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: as the LORD liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him. So Gehazi followed after Naaman. And when Naaman saw 21 one running after him, he lighted down from the chariot to meet him, and said, Is all well? And he said, All is 22 well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now

¹ Or, *some way*

18. *Rimmon*] He is called *Ramman* in cuneiform inscriptions, and *Hadad*. He was worshipped in Babylon, as well as in Syria, in a double character as the storm-god and a destroyer, and also as the rain-god and a beneficent deity. He was perhaps specially the God of Damascus, for in the royal family of that city are found such names as *Ben-hadad* (i.e. 'Son of the God Hadad') and *Tabrimmon* (i.e. 'Rimmon is propitious'). In Zech. xii. 11 Hadadrimmon seems to be identified with Tammuz (Adonis) the God of Spring.

19. *Go in peace*] Elisha seems thus tacitly to allow Naaman to 'halt between two opinions' (1 K. xviii. 21), but the time had not yet come when Israel might act as a missionary of the Divine Unity to the nations. For a few exceptional cases, exceptional leniency might as yet be practised.

a little way] The same Heb. phrase occurs in Gen. xxxv. 16. The exact meaning of it is doubtful.

20—27. THE SIN AND PUNISHMENT OF GEHAZI.

20. *Gehazi, the servant*] Pesh. and Targ. *Gehazi the disciple*. Gehazi stood to Elisha in the same relation as Elisha himself had stood to Elijah. Cp. iii. 11; 1 K. xix. 21. He was potentially Elisha's successor. His sin was a disciple's betrayal of his Master's confidence for a sum of money.

hath spared] Rather, *held back*, a strong expression.

somewhat] See 1 K. ii. 14; Luke vii. 40; Gal. ii. 6; Heb. viii. 3. The form *something* is rare in the English Bible (Gal. vi. 3).

22. *My master hath sent me*] In these words Gehazi destroyed the effects of Elisha's teaching that the blessing of the God of Israel was not to be bought with money. Naaman is now instructed that the prophet of JEHOVAH is ready to receive a reward, if it is conveyed to him with sufficient privacy and delicacy.

there be come to me from the hill country of Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets; give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver, and two changes of raiment. And Naaman said, Be content, take two talents. And he urged him, and bound two talents of silver in two bags, with two changes of raiment, and laid them upon two of his servants; and they bare them before him. And when he came to the hill, he took them from their hand, and bestowed them in the house: and he let the men go, and they departed. But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither. And he said unto him, Went not mine heart *with thee*, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards and vineyards, and sheep and oxen, and menservants and maid-servants? The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper *as white as snow*. And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold

¹ Heb. *Ophel*

² Or, *Mine heart went not from me, when &c.*

the hill country of Ephraim] Cp. 1 K. iv. 8, note.

23. *Becontent*] This expression means, *Consent! Agree!* Cp. vi. 3. Naaman certainly supposed that under cover of a polite fiction he was giving this large sum to the prophet himself.

24. *the hill*] Heb. *Ophel*. It is perhaps the name of a place, but if so, it is of course to be distinguished from the *Ophel* which formed the south-east corner of Jerusalem (2 Chr. xxvii. 3).

25. *before his master*] Perhaps rather, *by his master*.

26. *Went not mine heart with thee*] So LXX. (μετὰ σοῦ). Better as marg., *Mine heart went not [from me]*. Cp. Pesh. *Mine heart shewed me*. The prophet says in effect, 'I did not lose my power as a seer.'

the man turned] Rather, *one turned*. The language is purposely vague, since Gehazi's guilty conscience would swiftly interpret it.

Is it a time to receive money] Elisha thought it rather a time to testify to the character of the God of Israel.

oliveyards &c.] The prophet reads Gehazi's thoughts of the use to which the money was to be put.

27. *a leper as white as snow*] Cp. Exod. iv. 6. A specially heavy punishment for the abuse of special privileges.

CII. VI. 1—7. THE AXE'S HEAD.

1. *And the sons of the prophets*] The Acts of Elisha are not narrated in chronological order, for Gehazi who is dismissed from the

now, the place where we dwell before thee is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray thee, unto Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye. And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go. So he went with them. And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood. But as one was felling a beam, the axe-head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, my master! for it was borrowed. And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he shewed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither, and made the iron to swim. And he said, Take it up to thee. So he put out his hand, and took it.

Now the king of Syria warred against Israel; and he took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp. And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are coming down. And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of; and he saved himself there, not once nor twice. And the heart of the king of

¹ Or, *the iron did swim*

² Or, *encamping*

prophet's presence in v. 27 is spoken of as the prophet's servant in viii. 4. It may be therefore that vi. 1—7 is the continuation of iv. 38 ff.; and that the scene is Gilgal.

the place where we dwell before thee] Or, *the place where we sit before thee*, i.e. the house or porch in which the sons of the prophets sat, when Elisha received them.

too strait] Vulg. (rightly) *angustus*, 'narrow.'

³ *Be content*] Cp. v. 23, note.

⁶ *a stick*] The Heb. word means *tree*; LXX. ξύλον, Vulg. *lignum*.

8—23. ELISHA AND THE SYRIANS.

⁸ *shall be my camp*] Vulg. (giving a correct paraphrase) *ponamus insidias*, 'let us set an ambush.'

⁹ *the Syrians are coming down*] This expression gives a vivid picture of the scene: the king is not to use certain routes, for the Syrians hold the neighbouring heights ready to descend upon him from their place of vantage.

¹⁰ *sent to the place*] Reconnoitred the spot.

Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which
 12 of us is for the king of Israel? And one of his servants said, Nay, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou
 13 speakest in thy bedchamber. And he said, Go and see where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was
 14 told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan. Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they
 15 came by night, and compassed the city about. And when the ¹servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host with horses and chariots was round about the city. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my
 16 master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with
 17 them. And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about
 18 Elisha. And when they came down to him, Elisha prayed unto the LORD, and said, Smite this ²people, I pray thee, with blindness. And he smote them with blindness accord-
 19 ing to the word of Elisha. And Elisha said unto them,

¹ Or, *minister*

² Heb. *nation*

11. *which of us is for the king*] The text of this passage is doubtful. LXX. (so Vulg.), 'who is betraying me to the king'; a rendering which implies a slightly different Heb. text.

12. *in thy bedchamber*] A proverbial expression for a secret place (Eccl. x. 20).

13. *Dothan*] LXX. Δωθαιμ, both here and in Gen. xxxvii. 17; Judith vii. 18. The true form is perhaps, *Dôthayin*. It is the modern *Tell Dothan* a little to the west of the direct route from *Sebastiyeh* (Samaria) to *Fenin*. Dothan itself is in a plain, but it is overlooked by hills (Judith vii. 18) both from the north and from the south.

15. *the servant of the man of God*] The verse would run more smoothly, if the words *the servant of* were omitted; so that the statement would be, Elisha went forth, ... and his servant said to him. But LXX. Vulg. support the Massoretic text.

17. *horses and chariots of fire*] Cp. ii. 11.

18. *blindness*] Heb. *samvêrim*, a word found only here and in Gen. xix. 11. LXX. *dopaola* in both places. It means here blindness of mind, as the sequel shews, not of eyes.

This is not the way, neither is this the city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom ye seek. And he led them to Samaria. And it came to pass, when they were 20 come into Samaria, that Elisha said, LORD, open the eyes of these men, that they may see. And the LORD opened their eyes, and they saw; and, behold, they were in the midst of Samaria. And the king of Israel said unto Elisha, 21 when he saw them, My father, shall I smite them? shall I smite them? And he answered, Thou shalt not smite 22 them: wouldest thou smite those whom thou hast taken captive with thy sword and with thy bow? set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master. And he prepared great provision for them: 23 and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. And the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel.

19. *he led them to Samaria*] There is nothing improbable in this story, if we acknowledge that Elisha possessed beyond most men self-possession and readiness of speech and action. The real difficulty of the account is the moral difficulty; How could a prophet use this deceit, how could he ask his God to aid him in it? The answer to which is that to deceive an enemy was considered by no one at this time to be wrong, and if the device was not wrong, there was no reason against praying for Divine aid in carrying it out. Elisha in this point was only not in advance of his age. Cp. 1 K. xxii. 20—22.

20. *when they were come into Samaria*] We may assume that in the course of the ten mile march from Dothan to Samaria Elisha managed to communicate with the king, so that the Syrians would find themselves ambushed on their arrival.

21. *My father*] Cp. v. 13, note.

22. *Thou shalt not smite them*] If ordinary prisoners of war were not to be killed, how much less these Syrians whom God Himself had delivered to Israel as guests. The prophet's remonstrance implies clearly that it was not usual to put prisoners of war to death. The unmercifulness of Eastern warriors in general and of Hebrew warriors in particular has been much exaggerated. The terrible instances of massacre which can be quoted from the history of Israel can be paralleled from the history of Greece, and even from the (mediaeval) history of England.

bread and water] Cp. 1 K. xiii. 19, note.

23. *the bands*] Cp. v. 2, note.

came no more] This statement is too definite, unless we assume that this incident took place as late as the reign of Joash the grandson of Jehu. Cp. xlii. 3; 14—19, 23.

24 And it came to pass after this, that Ben-hadad king of
 Syria gathered all his host, and went up, and besieged
 25 Samaria. And there was a great famine in Samaria: and,
 behold, they besieged it, until an ass's head was sold for
 fourscore ¹pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a kab of
 26 dove's dung for five ¹pieces of silver. And as the king of
 Israel was passing by upon the wall, there cried a woman
 27 unto him, saying, Help, my lord, O king. And he said,
²If the LORD do not help thee, whence shall I help thee?
 28 out of the threshing-floor, or out of the winepress? And

¹ Or, shekels

² Or, *Nay, let the LORD help thee!*

24.—CH. VII. 2. SAMARIA UNDER SIEGE AND FAMINE.

24. *Ben-hadad*] Though the Syrian king is named, the king of Israel is not, but he was probably Joram the son of Ahab. Cp. v. 32. It is on the other hand possible that the Israelite king was Jehoahaz the son of Jehu and the Syrian king a later Ben-hadad, who reigned in Elisha's old age. The order certainly is not chronological. Cp. v. 1, note.

KINGS OF SYRIA MENTIONED.

Ben-hadad (1 K. xx. 1, 2)
 „ (2 K. vi. 24; viii. 7 ff.)
 Hazael (2 K. viii. 28)
 „ (2 K. x. 32)
 „ (2 K. xiii. 3)
 Ben-hadad (2 K. xiii. 3)
 „ (2 K. xiii. 24, 25)

CONTEMPORARY KINGS OF ISRAEL.

Ahab
 Joram (?)
 Joram
 Jehu
 Jehoahaz
 „
 Jehoash (Joash)

25. *the fourth part*] This is the regular term in the Bible (A. V. and R. V.). *Quarter* is not used in this sense.

kab] About half a gallon; 180 *kab* went to the *cor* mentioned in 1 K. iv. 22 (see note there).

of dove's dung] So LXX. Vulg. The expression is probably in its origin proverbial, and not to be taken literally. Another suggestion is that the Heb. word (found here only) is the name of some kind of grain, e.g. spelt.

27. *If the LORD do not help thee*] Marg. *Nay, let the LORD help thee!* If the text is correct, this alternative translation is to be accepted just as it stands, but it is better to follow a slight correction of the Heb. text. The verse should probably run, *And he said unto her* (LXX. *αὐτῆς*), *The LORD help thee!* This expression amounts to a refusal of help, just as *Allah ya'tik* ('May God give thee!') is a formula for repulsing beggars in modern Syria.

the king said unto her, What aileth thee? And she answered, This woman said unto me, Give thy son, that we may eat him to-day, and we will eat my son to-morrow. So we boiled my son, and did eat him: and I said unto 29 her on the next day, Give thy son, that we may eat him: and she hath hid her son. And it came to pass, when the 30 king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes; (now he was passing by upon the wall;) and the people looked, and, behold, he had sackcloth within upon his flesh. Then he said, God do so to me, and more also, if the head 31 of Elisha the son of Shaphat shall stand on him this day. But Elisha sat in his house, and the elders sat with him; 32 and *the king* sent a man from before him: but ere the messenger came to him, he said to the elders, See ye how this son of a murderer hath sent to take away mine head? look, when the messenger cometh, shut the door, and ¹hold the door fast against him: is not the sound of his master's feet behind him? And while he yet talked with them, 33 behold, the messenger came down unto him: and he said, Behold, this evil is of the LORD; why should I wait for the LORD any longer? And Elisha said, Hear ye the word 7 of the LORD: thus saith the LORD, To-morrow about this

¹ Heb. *thrust him back with the door*

29. *and did eat him*] Cp. Lam. ii. 20.

31. *God do so to me*] Cp. 1 K. xix. 2.

32. *the elders sat with him*] Having come to consult the prophet in their extremity. Cp. Ezek. xiv. 1.

this son of a murderer] If the phrase is to be understood literally, the 'murderer' is probably Ahab (cp. ix. 7, 26), and the murderer's son Joram, but in Eastern idiom it may mean no more than 'This murderer.' Joram is a 'murderer' in intention.

is not the sound of his master's feet behind him?] Elisha knows Joram's vacillating character, and concludes that the king will try to recall or delay his own order.

33. *and he said*] The words which follow are the king's, but the account seems to be abbreviated at this point, and it is uncertain whether the messenger uttered them or Joram himself.

why should I wait for the LORD any longer?] From this speech we conclude that Elisha had promised the LORD's help for the city, and had counselled the king not to surrender to the Syrians.

- time shall a ¹measure of fine flour be *sold* for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.
- 2 Then the captain on whose hand the king leaned answered the man of God, and said, Behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might this thing be? And he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof.
- 3 Now there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate: and they said one to another, Why sit we
- 4 here until we die? If we say, We will enter into the city,

¹ Heb. *seah*

CII. VII.

1. *a measure*] Heb. *seah*. Cp. Matt. xiii. 33 (*odra rpla*). It contained six *kab*, and was the thirtieth part of a *cor*. See 1 K. iv. 22, note. In English measure it would be about 3 gallons. The intrinsic value of the *shekel* which purchased the *seah* was 25 *gd.*, if the Phœnician (heavy) shekel be meant, but the Babylonian *shekel* was of course somewhat more valuable. Cp. v. 5, note.

2. *the captain*] The Heb. word has been supposed to signify the *third* person in a chariot. Thus, in the king's chariot the first person would be the king, the second the driver, and the third the king's favourite officer. The 'captain' here mentioned may have been such an officer. But the term *the captains* is sometimes used as though it denoted a special body of men, e.g. the picked members of the body-guard, who manned the king's chariots in any capacity. Cp. x. 25; 1 K. ix. 22; Exod. xiv. 7; 2 Sam. xxiii. 8.

on whose hand the king leaned] The confidential counsellor who was continually at the king's side. Cp. v. 18 (of Naaman).

Behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might this thing be?] Rather (since the Hebrew consists of two distinct utterances), **Behold, the LORD is about to make windows in heaven! Can this thing be?** The first is a mocking assertion, the second an unbelieving question (so LXX.). There is no *if* after *Behold* in the Hebrew.

make windows in heaven] Targ. 'open windows and send down good things from heaven.' For the expression *windows* cp. Gen. vii. 11.

3-20. FAMINE FOLLOWED BY UNEXPECTED PLENTY.

3. *at the entering in of the gate*] Cp. Lev. xiii. 46, which prescribes that the dwelling of the leper is to be 'without the camp'; also Luke xvii. 12, where our Lord meets ten lepers near the entrance to a village. Lepers were not driven very far away, but were compelled to occupy separate dwellings.

then the famine is in the city, and we shall die there: and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come, and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians: if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die. And they rose up in the twilight, to go unto the camp of the Syrians: and when they were come to the outermost part of the camp of the Syrians, behold, there was no man there. For the Lord had made the host of the Syrians to hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host: and they said one to another, Lo, the king of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites, and the kings of the Egyptians, to come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight, and left their tents, and their horses, and their asses, even the camp as it was, and fled for their life. And when these lepers came to the outermost part of the camp, they went into one tent, and did eat and drink, and carried thence silver, and gold,

5. *in the twilight*] Cp. v. 7. The Heb. *nesheph* is used both of the morning and of the evening twilight. The Syrians fled unnoticed by the garrison of Samaria in the evening twilight, and the lepers must have reached the camp almost as soon as the Syrians left it. It was still 'night' (v. 12) when the lepers' news reached the king. The distance from the walls to 'the outermost part of the camp' need not have been more than 200 or 300 yards.

6. *hath hired*] Cp. xvi. 7—9; 1 K. xv. 18—20.

the kings of the Hittites] Cp. 1 K. ix. 20; x. 29.

the kings of the Egyptians] The reign of Joram of Israel lies between two dates fixed from Assyrian sources, i.e. between 854 B.C. when Ahab fought at the battle of Karkar and 842 B.C. when Jehu¹ (perhaps in the first year of his reign) paid tribute to Shalmaneser II. The king of Egypt contemporary with Joram would therefore probably be Takerat II. whose reign Flinders Petrie (*History of Egypt*, vol. III., page 228) assigns to about 856—837 B.C. Takerat belonged to the Twenty-second Dynasty under which there was a system of co-regency between the king and the heir apparent. Thus Takerat II. was associated with his father, Uasarkon (Osorkon) II., during the last five years of his father's reign, and during the last six years of Takerat II. his successor Sheshonq III. was associated with him. Thus under the Twenty-second Dynasty it was natural to speak of *the kings* rather than of *the king* of Egypt.

¹ The *Ja-u-a son of Humri (Omri)* of Shalmaneser's inscription is usually identified with *Jehu*, but it is possible that *Jehoram (Joram)* is meant.

and raiment, and went and hid it; and they came back, and entered into another tent, and carried thence also, and went
 9 and hid it. Then they said one to another, We do not well: this day is a day of good tidings, and we hold our peace: if we tarry till the morning light, ¹punishment will overtake us: now therefore come, let us go and tell the
 10 king's household. So they came and called unto the ²porter of the city: and they told them, saying, We came to the camp of the Syrians, and, behold, there was no man there, neither voice of man, but the horses tied, and the asses tied,
 11 and the tents as they were. And ³he called the porters; and they told it to the king's household within. And the king arose in the night, and said unto his servants, I will now shew you what the Syrians have done to us. They know that we be hungry; therefore are they gone out of the camp to hide themselves in the field, saying, When they come out of the city, we shall take them alive, and get into
 13 the city. And one of his servants answered and said, Let some take, I pray thee, five of the horses that remain, which are left ⁴in the city, (behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are left in it; behold, they are as all the multitude of Israel that are consumed:) and let us send and see.
 14 They took therefore two chariots with horses; and the king
 15 sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see. And

¹ Or, *our iniquity will find us out*

² Or, *porters*

³ Or, *the porters called*

⁴ Heb. *in it*

9. *punishment will overtake us*] Marg. *our iniquity will find us out*. Cp. Num. xxxii. 23, 'Be sure your sin will find you out.' The Heb. word for *iniquity* ('*āvōn*) connotes also *punishment for iniquity*, and the same is true of the word for *sin*.

10. *the porter*] Marg. *the porters*. In Hebrew a substantive in the singular may often be translated as a collective. LXX. (reading the word with different vowels), 'towards the gate'; this may be right.

11. *he called the porters*] Better as marg., *the porters called* (so LXX.).

12. *to hide themselves*] Cp. iii. 24, note; vi. 9, note.

13. *that are consumed*] i.e. that are reduced to skin and bone. The horses might be risked, for they were almost valueless.

14. *two chariots with horses*] LXX. (perhaps from a different reading of the Hebrew) *two mounted men*, a better scouting party than *two chariots*.

they went after them unto Jordan: and, lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste. And the messengers returned, and told the king. And the people went out, and spoiled the 16 camp of the Syrians. So a measure of fine flour was sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, according to the word of the LORD. And the king appointed 17 the captain on whose hand he leaned to have the charge of the gate: and the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died as the man of God had said, who spake when the king came down to him. And it came to pass, as the 18 man of God had spoken to the king, saying, Two measures of barley for a shekel, and a measure of fine flour for a shekel, shall be to-morrow about this time in the gate of Samaria; and that captain answered the man of God, and 19 said, Now, behold, if the LORD should make windows in heaven, might such a thing be? and he said, Behold, thou shalt see it with thine eyes, but shalt not eat thereof: it 20 came to pass even so unto him; for the people trode upon him in the gate, and he died.

Now Elisha had spoken unto the woman, whose son 8 he had restored to life, saying, Arise, and go thou and thine household, and sojourn wheresoever thou canst sojourn: for the LORD hath called for a famine; and it shall also come upon the land seven years. And the woman arose, 2 and did according to the word of the man of God: and she went with her household, and sojourned in the land of the Philistines seven years. And it came to pass at the seven 3

15. *vessels*] Heb. *kēlīm*, a word rendered *weapons* in Gen. xxvii. 3; *baggage* in 1 Sam. xvii. 22; *instruments* passim. It may be compared with our word *things*.

in their haste] Or, *in their alarm*. Cp. Ps. cxvi. 11 (with marg.).

17. *trode upon him*] It may be that he attempted to stop the people from going out and plundering the camp.

CH. VIII. 1—6. THE LATER HISTORY OF THE SHUNAMMITE.

1. *sojourn*] This word implies residence in a foreign land (Ruth i. 1).
Vulg. *peregrinare*.

seven years] Cp. Gen. xli. 27; 2 Sam. xxiv. 13. Famines were common, being due to three separate causes, war, drought, and locusts.

2. *the land of the Philistines*] The low-lying coast-lands were (and are) more fertile than the 'mountains of Israel,' and so were able

years' end, that the woman returned out of the land of the Philistines: and she went forth to cry unto the king for her house and for her land. Now the king was talking with Gehazi the servant of the man of God, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done. And it came to pass, as he was telling the king how he had restored to life him that was dead, that, behold, the woman, whose son he had restored to life, cried to the king for her house and for her land. And Gehazi said, My lord, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son, whom Elisha restored to life. And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed unto her a certain officer, saying, Restore all that was hers, and all the fruits of the field since the day that she left the land, even until now.

And Elisha came to Damascus; and Ben-hadad the king of Syria was sick; and it was told him, saying, The man of God is come hither. And the king said unto Hazael, Take a present in thine hand, and go meet the

¹ Or, *eunuch*

to hold out longer against famine. Other places of refuge were Egypt (Gen. xii. 10), Moab (Ruth i. 1), and the Zidonian territory (1 K. xvii. 9).

3. *the woman*] She is not called a widow, and nothing is said about her husband, but this agrees with the representation given in iv. 8. Here we have probably a trace of the old Semitic customs of kinship and marriage according to which a woman, though she had a husband, retained her freedom, and her property, and her place in her own tribe. Cp. iv. 13; 1 K. vii. 13.

4. *Gehazi*] The appearance of Gehazi here shews that we must assign this incident to an earlier date than the healing of Naaman in ch. v.

6. *officer*] Marg. *eunuch*. Cp. xxv. 19; 1 K. xxii. 9. The more general rendering is probably correct here, but in ix. 32 the special sense is to be preferred.

7—15. ELISHA AT DAMASCUS.

(See note on 1 K. xix. 15, 16.)

7. *came to Damascus*] Elisha has no fear among the Syrians, for a prophet is a privileged person even outside his own country. Cp. 1 K. xix. 15. Even the account in vi. 13 ff. does not imply that the Syrians wished to do any harm to Elisha.

Ben-hadad] Cp. vi. 24, note; also the introductory note to 1 K. xx.

8. *Hazael*] Nothing is said as to Hazael's position, nor is it said whether he was related to Ben-hadad or not, but he was known in Israel.

a present] It is commonly used of an offering made to God, but

man of God, and inquire of the LORD by him, saying, Shall I recover of this sickness? So Hazael went to meet 9 him, and took a present ¹with him, ²even of every good thing of Damascus, forty camels' burden, and came and stood before him, and said, Thy son Ben-hadad king of Syria hath sent me to thee, saying, Shall I recover of this sickness? And Elisha said unto him, Go, ³say unto him, 10 Thou shalt surely recover; howbeit the LORD hath shewed me that he shall surely die. And he settled his countenance 11 stedfastly upon him, until he was ashamed: and the man of God wept. And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? 12 And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash in pieces their little ones, and rip up their women with child. And Hazael said, But what is thy 13 servant, which is but a dog, that he should do this great

¹ Heb. *in his hand* ² Or, *and* ³ According to another reading, *say, Thou shalt not recover: for the LORD &c.*

it occurs in 1 K. x. 25 of tribute brought to a king. Cp. v. 15; 1 K. xiv. 3.

9. *stood before him*] Cp. v. 15.

Thy son Ben-hadad] Similarly in xiii. 14 the king of Israel addresses Elisha as, 'My father!'

10. *say unto him, Thou shalt surely recover, howbeit &c.*] Another reading of the Hebrew, with the change of a single letter, is, *say, Thou shalt not recover: for.* The Heb. word *lo* means either *unto him* or *not* according as the final silent letter is *aleph* or *vav*. The more difficult reading, that of the text, is to be preferred. Elisha reads Hazael's purpose, and reveals it in its true character. He will be a murderer, for his master is on the road to recovery.

11. *he settled his countenance stedfastly upon him*] Cp. Luke xxii. 56. The prophet gazes upon the Syrian forgetful of all but his own vision of the future until Hazael becomes confused.

12. *the evil that thou wilt do*] Cp. x. 32 f.; xii. 17; xiii. 3, 22.

wilt thou set on fire] Wood was freely used in ancient fortifications, particularly about the gates. One of the common methods therefore of attacking a stronghold was to attempt to set fire to it. Cp. Jud. ix. 48, 49; 1 Macc. v. 5. On the Assyrian reliefs the soldiers are often represented applying torches to the walls of fortresses.

rip up] This is mentioned as the extremity of cruelty. Cp. xv. 16; Amos i. 13.

13. *which is but a dog*] This is the ordinary language of Eastern self-depreciation; it is no indication of humility in Hazael. David calls

thing? And Elisha answered, The LORD hath shewed me
 14 that thou shalt be king over Syria. Then he departed from
 Elisha, and came to his master; who said to him, What
 said Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me that
 15 thou shouldest surely recover. And it came to pass on the
 morrow, that he took the coverlet, and dipped it in water,
 and spread it on his face, so that he died: and Hazael
 reigned in his stead.

16 And in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab king
 of Israel, ¹Jehoshaphat being then king of Judah, Jehoram
 the son of Jehoshaphat king of Judah began to reign.
 17 Thirty and two years old was he when he began to reign;
 18 and he reigned eight years in Jerusalem. And he walked
 in the way of the kings of Israel, as did the house of Ahab:
 for he had the daughter of Ahab to wife: and he did that
 19 which was evil in the sight of the LORD. Howbeit the LORD
 would not destroy Judah, for David his servant's sake, as he

¹ Some ancient authorities omit the words *Jehoshaphat being
 then king of Judah*

himself a *dead dog* in 1 Sam. xxiv. 14. A.V. (*Is thy servant a dog?*) is quite wrong.

this great thing] Hazael admires that at which Elisha weeps.

16—24 (2 Chr. xxi. 5—10, 20). THE REIGN OF JEHORAM
 (JORAM) OVER JUDAH.

16. *in the fifth year of Joram the son of Ahab*] There is some confusion about this date. According to iii. 1 which agrees with 1 K. xxii. 5 Jehoram of Israel came to the throne in the eighteenth year of Jehoshaphat. Jehoshaphat, after reigning seven years longer, twenty-five years in all, was succeeded by his son, Jehoram (1 K. xxii. 42, 50). According to this reckoning Jehoram the son of Jehoshaphat began to reign in the *seventh* year of Jehoram king of Israel. On the other hand the date given here (v. 16) agrees with that given in v. 25. Jehoram becomes king in the *fifth* year of his Israelite namesake, and is succeeded by his son Ahaziah in the *twelfth* year, two dates which give according to the Heb. (inclusive) reckoning *eight* years for his reign in agreement with v. 17.

18. *the daughter of Ahab*] Athaliah, who afterwards usurped the throne (v. 26; xi. 1—20).

that which was evil] At his accession he put his brethren to death (2 Chr. xxi. 4, 13).

19. *Judah*] In Chron. *the house of David*, a reading which agrees better with the rest of the verse.

promised him to give unto him a lamp ¹for his children
 alway. In his days Edom revolted from under the hand ²⁰
 of Judah, and made a king over themselves. Then Joram ²¹
 passed over to Zair, and all his chariots with him; and he
 rose up by night, and smote the Edomites which compassed
 him about, and the captains of the chariots: and the people
 fled to their tents. So Edom revolted from under the hand ²²
 of Judah, unto this day. Then did Libnah revolt at the
 same time. And the rest of the acts of Joram, and all that ²³
 he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of

¹ Another reading is, *and to his children*

a lamp] LXX. *λύχνον*. Thus figuratively applied (1 K. xi. 36; xv. 4) the Heb. word is written *nîr*; in the ordinary sense it is *nêr*. The lamp was both indispensable and conspicuous (Matt. v. 15); like our word *hearth* it denotes the *home*. The light kept burning was a sign that all was well. Cp. Prov. xxxi. 18. The removal of the light on the other hand was a sign of the desolation of the home. Cp. Job xviii. 6; Jer. xxv. 10 (where *the light of the candle* should be *the light of the lamp*). To give a lamp is (in Shakespeare's phrase) to give a local habitation. Contrast the denunciation of 'Babylon' in Rev. xviii. 23, 'The light of a lamp shall shine no more at all in thee.'

for his children] So some editions of the Heb. Bible and LXX. Most authorities read, *and to his children (sons)*.

20. *revolted*] Cp. 1 K. xxii. 47.

21. *to Zair*] Jerome, *Onomasticon* (s.v. Bala = 'Bela'), says: 'It is now called Zoara and is the only one of the five cities of Sodom preserved through the prayers of Lot. It overlooks the Dead Sea and has a garrison of Roman soldiers.... There are indications of its ancient fertility in the neighbourhood.' As no city *Zair* is known, and as this *Zoara* lay at the south end of the Dead Sea in or close to Edomite territory, it is probable that the true reading is *to Zoar*. Josephus (*Wars* iv. § 482) calls the place 'Zoara of Arabia.' Cp. G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*, p. 506, note 6.

and he rose up...their tents] Render, *and it came to pass, that, when he rose up, etc. the people fled to their tents*. Jehoram's doings are described in a temporal or circumstantial clause; the main fact was that 'the people,' i.e. the bulk of the army, scattered to their homes, when the king was in difficulties. Thus the campaign failed.

and the captains of the chariots] These words break the construction of the Hebrew and are perhaps a gloss.

22. *Libnah*] The site is at present unidentified; it was a fortress, and a priestly city (1 Chr. vi. 57), probably not far from Lachish (*Tell-el-Hesi*) in the south or south-west of Judah (xix. 8; Josh. x. 29, 31).

24 the kings of Judah? And Joram slept with his fathers, and was buried with his fathers in the city of David: and Ahaziah his son reigned in his stead.

25 In the twelfth year of Joram the son of Ahab king of Israel did Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah begin
26 to reign. Two and twenty years old was Ahaziah when he began to reign; and he reigned one year in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Athaliah the ¹daughter of Omri
27 king of Israel. And he walked in the way of the house of Ahab, and did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as did the house of Ahab: for he was the son in law of the
28 house of Ahab. And he went with Joram the son of Ahab to war against Hazael king of Syria at Ramoth-gilead: and
29 the Syrians wounded Joram. And king Joram returned to be healed in Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given him at Ramah, when he fought against Hazael king of Syria. And Ahaziah the son of Jehoram king of Judah went down to see Joram the son of Ahab in Jezreel, because he was sick.

¹ Or, *granddaughter*. See ver. 18

24. *slept with his fathers*] In 2 Chr. xxi. 20, 'he departed without being desired; and they buried him in the city of David, but not in the sepulchres of the kings.'

25—29 (cp. 2 Chr. xxii. 1—6). AHAZIAH KING OF JUDAH.

26. *the daughter*] Really as marg., *granddaughter*.

27. *the way of the house of Ahab*] This included Baal-worship. Cp. xi. 18; 1 K. xvi. 31.

28. *Hazael*] Cp. 7—15; vi. 24, note.

Ramoth-gilead] Cp. ix. 1 ff.; 1 K. iv. 13, note.

29. *to see Joram*] Similarly his grandfather Jehoshaphat visited Ahab (1 K. xxii. 2), Joram's father.

CH. IX. 1—13. THE ANOINTING OF JEHU.

In 1 K. xxi. 21, 22 Elijah announced that the dynasty of Ahab would be utterly swept away like that of Jeroboam and that of Baasha. Upon Ahab's repentance however the doom was postponed (1 K. xxi. 27—29). In the present chapter nothing is said of a fresh revelation of the Divine will on this matter, but Elisha seems to act on his own initiative, perhaps from a memory of the charge given to his predecessor in 1 K. xix. 15, 16, or from a belief that the accession of Hazael in Syria was a

And Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the 9 prophets, and said unto him, Gird up thy loins, and take this vial of oil in thine hand, and go to Ramoth-gilead. And when thou comest thither, look out there Jehu the son 2 of Jehoshaphat the son of Nimshi, and go in, and make him arise up from among his brethren, and carry him to an inner chamber. Then take the vial of oil, and pour it on his 3 head, and say, Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then open the door, and flee, and tarry not. So the young man, even the young man the prophet, 4 went to Ramoth-gilead. And when he came, behold, the 5 captains of the host were sitting; and he said, I have an errand to thee, O captain. And Jehu said, Unto which of all us? And he said, To thee, O captain. And he arose, 6 and went into the house; and he poured the oil on his head, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, I have anointed thee king over the people of the LORD, even over Israel. And thou shalt smite the house 7 of Ahab thy master, that I may avenge the blood of my servants the prophets, and the blood of all the servants of the LORD, at the hand of Jezebel. For the whole house 8

Divine signal for action to be taken in Israel. It is probable that he, with his fiery character, mistook the Divine will, and struck, when he should have waited. Cp. 1 K. xix. 15, 16, note.

1. *one of the sons of the prophets*] If Elisha had gone in person to Ramoth, Joram's suspicions would have been aroused (so the Greek Commentator, Theodoret). Cp. 1 Sam. xvi. 1, 2.

Gird up thy loins] For running. Cp. v. 29. There is to be no delay.

vial] LXX. φακόν, Vulg. *lenticulum*, 'a flask.'

2. *Jehu*] Cp. 1 K. xix. 16.

his brethren] i.e. his companions.

3. *and tarry not*] Elisha designed a lightning stroke; the delivery of his message to Jehu should not have occupied more than five minutes.

5. *I have an errand*] Or, *I have a word*.

And Jehu said] It was characteristic of Jehu to take the lead.

7. *And thou shalt smite*] If the prophet-messenger spoke all the words that follow down to *there shall be none to bury her* (v. 10), he exceeded Elisha's instructions, but it is more probable that they are the addition of the compiler giving his interpretation of Elisha's own brief direction. Certainly vv. 8—10 have the appearance of being comment.

of Ahab shall perish: and I will cut off from Ahab every man child, and him that is shut up and him that is left at
 9 large in Israel. And I will make the house of Ahab like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house
 10 of Baasha the son of Ahijah. And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the portion of Jezreel, and there shall be none
 11 to bury her. And he opened the door, and fled. Then Jehu came forth to the servants of his lord: and one said unto him, Is all well? wherefore came this mad fellow to thee? And he said unto them, Ye know the man and what
 12 his talk was. And they said, It is false; tell us now. And he said, Thus and thus spake he to me, saying, Thus saith
 13 the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then they hasted, and took every man his garment, and put it

8. *him that is shut up &c.*] See 1 K. xiv. 10, note. The phrase means, 'all persons whatsoever in Israel that are connected with the house of Ahab.'

9. *like the house of Jeroboam*] Cp. 1 K. xv. 29.

like the house of Baasha] Cp. 1 K. xvi. 11.

10. *the dogs shall eat Jezebel*] So 1 K. xxi. 23.

in the portion of Jezreel] So also *vv.* 36, 37. *Portion* = Heb. *hēlek*; LXX. *μερίδι*. In 1 K. xxi. 23 (see note), *by the rampart of Jezreel*. *Rampart* = Heb. *hēl*; LXX. *παραίχλωματι*. The reading *hēlek*, 'portion' has probably been introduced here and in *vv.* 36, 37, through a confusion with the phrase used in *v.* 25. But different things are meant.

11. *to the servants of his lord*] The prophet had called them Jehu's brethren, i.e. his comrades; a moment would now shew whether they would remain faithful to their king, Joram, or follow Jehu.

this mad fellow] LXX. *ὁ ἐπίλημπος ὄδρος*, *this epileptic*. 'Mad,' because of the haste and excitement with which he came and with which he departed. In Heb. the word here used for *mad*, and in *v.* 20 for *furiously* come from the same root. But in addition to this the ecstasies into which prophets fell, and the occasional strangeness of their actions gave them a name for madness. Cp. Jer. xxix. 26; also 1 Sam. xix. 18—24.

Ye know] They might perhaps have guessed from the traces of the anointing oil upon him.

12. *Thus and thus*] The expression is emphatic, and prepares the way for an important announcement. Indeed Jehu staked his life on the words which follow.

13. *Then they hastened*] They at once accepted Jehu as king.

his garment] i.e. the long outer garment. Cp. Matt. xxi. 7, 'They... put on them (on the ass and the colt) their garments,' τὰ ἱμάτια.

under him ¹ on the top of the stairs, and blew the trumpet, saying, Jehu is king. So Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat the ¹⁴ son of Nimshi conspired against Joram. (Now Joram kept Ramoth-gilead, he and all Israel, because of Hazael king of Syria: but king ² Joram was returned to be healed in ¹⁵ Jezreel of the wounds which the Syrians had given him, when he fought with Hazael king of Syria.) And Jehu said, If this be your mind, then let none escape and go forth out of the city, to go to tell it in Jezreel. So Jehu ¹⁶ rode in a chariot, and went to Jezreel; for Joram lay there. And Ahaziah king of Judah was come down to see Joram. Now the watchman stood on the tower in Jezreel, and he ¹⁷ spied the company of Jehu as he came, and said, I see a company. And Joram said, Take an horseman, and send to meet them, and let him say, ³ Is it peace? So there went ¹⁸ one on horseback to meet him, and said, Thus saith the

¹ Or, *on the bare steps* ² Heb. *Jehoram*, and in *vv.* 17, 21, 22, 23, 24
³ Or, *Is all well?*

on the top of the stairs] Ramoth-gilead ('Heights of Gilead') was doubtless situated on a hill, and 'the stairs' were probably some well-known ascent, either within the city or leading up to the gate of the city from without. Marg. calls attention to the haste of the conspirators. They improvised a throne out of steps.

14—26. THE CONSPIRACY OF JEHU AGAINST JORAM.

Jehu, as the following account shews, realised that a conspirator must strike quickly and unexpectedly.

15. *If this be your mind*] The Heb. expression cannot be literally rendered. LXX. *if your soul is truly with me.*

16. *rode in a chariot*] Better, *mounted his chariot*. Jehu took with him a 'company' (*v.* 17), consisting probably of other chariots and horsemen.

17. *on the tower in Jezreel*] Jezreel stands in a commanding position looking westward across the great plain of Jezreel to Carmel, and eastward down the valley of Jezreel, which slopes gently with a fall of 600 feet in twelve miles to Beth-shan, and thence to the Jordan a mile or two beyond. Jehu's company would be visible for many miles as it approached the city from the east after crossing the Jordan. Cp. G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*, pp. 381—3.

a company] A better rendering perhaps would be *a goodly company*, for the Heb. word connotes *abundance*; in Isa. lx. 6 it is rendered *multitude*.

Is it peace?] The usual form of enquiry. Cp. *iv.* 26.

king, Is it peace? And Jehu said, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, The messenger came to them, but he cometh not again. Then he sent out a second on horseback, which came to them, and said, Thus saith the king, Is it peace? And Jehu answered, What hast thou to do with peace? turn thee behind me. And the watchman told, saying, He came even unto them, and cometh not again: and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi; for he driveth furiously. And Joram said, 'Make ready. And they made ready his chariot. And Joram king of Israel and Ahaziah king of Judah went out, each in his chariot, and they went out to meet Jehu, and found him in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite. And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, Is it peace, Jehu? And he answered, What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many? And Joram turned his hands, and fled, and said to Ahaziah,

¹ Or, *Yoke*

18. *What hast thou to do with, peace?*] LXX. renders literally, 'What is to thee and to peace?' The same Heb. idiom is found in John ii. 4, *τι εσθι και σολ*; Jehu refuses to answer the question.

turn thee behind me] The messenger on his fresh horse, if allowed to return, would arrive in Jezreel before the weary chariot horses, and his report that Jehu refused any information would shew that Jehu was in revolt.

20. *furiously*] Lit. *with madness*.

22. *when Joram saw Jehu*] Jehu, being fully determined on the death of Joram, allows the king to come quite near, in order that his escape may be impossible. The combination of headlong energy with cool deliberation which Jehu shewed on this occasion, was doubtless characteristic of the man. To it no doubt he owed his leading position in Joram's army.

What peace, so long as &c.] Rather, *What peace? Should it extend to the whoredoms of Jezebel thy mother, and her many witchcrafts?* The two sins, whoredom and witchcraft, are mentioned together as the characteristic sins of the inhabitants of a harem. Witchcraft was believed to be a real power, and so was used to further the aims of unlawful passions. It is probable that there is here a further reference to Jezebel's introduction of foreign worship, for Baal-worship was regarded as spiritual whoredom (Hos. ii. 13).

23. *turned his hands*] Joram was driving his own chariot. Cp. 1 K. xxii. 34.

There is treachery, O Ahaziah. And Jehu ¹drew his bow ²⁴ with his full strength, and smote Joram between his arms, and the arrow went out at his heart, and he sunk down in his chariot. Then said *Jehu* to Bidkar his captain, Take up, ²⁵ and cast him in the portion of the field of Naboth the Jezreelite: for remember how that, when I and thou rode together after Ahab his father, the LORD ²laid this burden upon him; Surely I have seen yesterday the blood of ²⁶ Naboth, and the blood of his sons, saith the LORD; and I will requite thee in this ³plat, saith the LORD. Now therefore take and cast him into the plat of ground, according to the word of the LORD. But when Ahaziah the king of ²⁷ Judah saw this, he fled by the way of the garden house. And Jehu followed after him, and said, Smite him also in the chariot: *and they smote him* at the ascent of Gur, which

¹ Heb. filled his hand with the bow

² Or, uttered this oracle against him

³ Or, portion

^{24.} drew his bow with his full strength] No faltering in any of Jehu's actions.

^{25.} his captain] Cp. vii. 2, note.

rode together] The Heb. word suggests a procession of chariots or horsemen going two and two.

laid this burden upon him] The medium was Elijah (1 K. xxi. 17), though he is not mentioned here.

^{26.} yesterday] From this word it appears that Naboth was slain on one day, and that Ahab went to seize the vineyard (and to hear his own doom) the next day. This note of time is not given in 1 K. xxi.

and the blood of his sons] Cp. 1 K. xxi. 14, note.

plat] Plat, which is found here only in the Bible, though it is used by Herrick, is identical with the German *platt* 'flat'; so that properly it signifies a piece of level ground.

27—29 (cp. 2 Chr. xxii. 7—9). THE FATE OF AHAZIAH.

^{27.} by the way of the garden house] The Heb. for *the garden house* is *Beth-haggan*, which might perhaps be shortened to *Beth-gan*, LXX. Βαιθάβ. It is probably to be identified with *En-gannim* ('the spring of the gardens') a town of Issachar which is mentioned in connexion with Jezreel in Josh. xix. 21. Its modern representative would be *Jenin*, a large village to the south of Jezreel. Ahaziah would naturally flee southward.

and said, Smite him also in the chariot: and they smote him at the ascent of Gur] The text is doubtful, for it is most unnatural that the verb should be inserted in an exclamatory speech, and omitted in the

is by Ibleam. And he fled to Megiddo, and died there.
 28 And his servants carried him in a chariot to Jerusalem, and buried him in his sepulchre with his fathers in the city of David.

29 And in the eleventh year of Joram the son of Ahab began Ahaziah to reign over Judah.

30 And when Jehu was come to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it; and she painted her eyes, and tired her head, and
 31 looked out at the window. And as Jehu entered in at the gate, she said, 'Is it peace, thou Zimri, thy master's

¹ Or, *Is it well.*

regular course of the narrative. LXX. on the other hand represents a reading which has the vigour of an original text: *and said, Him also! And he (or one) smote him by the chariot at the ascent of Gai.* The Heb. expression for *And he smote him* might easily have been corrupted into *Smite him.*

at the ascent of Gur] Of this locality nothing is known. LXX. has *Gai* for *Gur.*

Ibleam] Cp. Josh. xvii. 11. Identified with a site called *Bel'ameh*, a little south of *En-gannim.*

Megiddo] Cp. 1 K. iv. 12, note. Apparently Ahaziah's retreat was cut off, and he was driven westward.

and died there] According to Chron., 'they caught him (now he was hiding in Samaria) and they brought him to Jehu, and slew him.' But the account in Kings is more precise as a whole, and is more probably correct.

28. *and buried him in his sepulchre]* Joram on the contrary was cast out unburied (v. 25). Cp. 1 K. xiii. 22; xiv. 13.

29. *in the eleventh year]* According to viii. 25 it was the *twelfth* year.

30—31. THE FATE OF JEZEBEL.

30. *painted her eyes]* LXX. ἐστρίψατο (ἐστρίβλατο). She painted her eyebrows and eyelids with kohl, στίβη or στίμμα, a compound of antimony used by women in the East then and now to add to the beauty of their eyes. Jezebel's intention is, like Cleopatra's, to 'die a queen.'

'Now, Charmian,

Shew me, my women, like a queen: go fetch
 My best attires.'

Antony and Cleopatra, Act v. Scene ii.

tired] i.e. attired.

31. *Is it peace...?]* Better as marg., *Is it well...?* The words are intended as a reproach. Cp. *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act v. Scene ii.

'What work is here! Charmian, is this well done?'

murderer? And he lifted up his face to the window, and ³² said, Who is on my side? who? And there looked out to him two or three eunuchs. And he said, Throw her ³³ down. So they threw her down: and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall, and on the horses: and he trode her under foot. And when he was come in, he did eat and ³⁴ drink; and he said, See now to this cursed woman, and bury her: for she is a king's daughter. And they went to ³⁵ bury her: but they found no more of her than the skull, and the feet, and the palms of her hands. Wherefore they ³⁶ came again, and told him. And he said, This is the word of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Elijah the Tishbite, saying, In the portion of Jezreel shall the dogs eat the flesh of Jezebel: and the carcase of Jezebel shall be as ³⁷ dung upon the face of the field in the portion of Jezreel; so that they shall not say, This is Jezebel.

^{32.} *looked out*] Rather, *looked down*. The window of the women's apartment would be far above the level of the street.

^{34.} *cursed*] i.e. lying under the curse quoted in *v.* 36.

^{36.} *by his servant Elijah*] Cp. 1 K. xxi. 23.

In the portion of Jezreel] See note on *v.* 10.

· CH. X. 1—28. THE RUTHLESSNESS OF JEHU.

The terrible story of treachery and massacre told here belongs, it must be remembered, to Eastern history. Such outbreaks are characteristic of Eastern monarchies. We are shewn here that there is a providence even over such terrible events as these. Two facts stand out; the house of Ahab was punished for its deeds of blood, and the worship of Baal was extinguished. But Jehu himself, the Avenger of blood and the Reformer of religion, stands condemned by the mere record of what he did. It is worthy of note that the prophet Elisha, though he prompted Jehu's first step, seems to stand aloof from the dynasty of Jehu until the third generation (Joash). The Syrian ravages which lasted through the reigns of Jehu, Jehoahaz, and part of that of Joash seem a fit punishment for the new dynasty, whose founder had massacred the royal house which had fought so stoutly against the Syrians.

The praise awarded to Jehu in *v.* 30 is balanced by the announcement of judgement on him and on his house for the blood of Jezreel in Hos. i. 4. The conspirator indeed appears in a double aspect; on the one hand he was an instrument of punishment for the house of Ahab, on the other he earned punishment for himself by the ruthless cruelty with which he carried out his work. The Heb. historian is, however, too naive to explain this; he leaves the events in the main to explain themselves.

10 Now Ahab had seventy sons in Samaria. And Jehu wrote letters, and sent to Samaria, unto the rulers of Jezreel, even the elders, and unto them that brought up *the sons of*
 2 Ahab, saying, And now as soon as this letter cometh to you, seeing your master's sons are with you, and there are with you, chariots and horses, a fenced city also, and armour;
 3 look ye out the best and meetest of your master's sons, and set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's
 4 house. But they were exceedingly afraid, and said, Behold, the two kings stood not before him: how then shall we
 5 stand? And he that was over the household, and he that was over the city, the elders also, and they that brought up *the children*, sent to Jehu, saying, We are thy servants, and will do all that thou shalt bid us; we will not make any
 6 man king: do thou that which is good in thine eyes. Then he wrote a letter the second time to them, saying, If ye be on my side, and if ye will hearken unto my voice, take ye the heads of the men your master's sons, and come to me to Jezreel by to-morrow this time. Now the king's sons, being seventy persons, were with the great men of the city,
 7 which brought them up. And it came to pass, when the letter came to them, that they took the king's sons, and slew them, even seventy persons, and put their heads in

CH. X. 1—11. THE EXTERMINATION OF THE HOUSE OF AHAB.

1. *letters*] The Hebrew word may mean one letter as in 1 K. xxi. 8 (marg. *a letter*).

unto the rulers of Jezreel] LXX. *rulers of Samaria*; Vulg. Pesh. (true text) *rulers* (only). Yet the Heb. text may be right, for the 'rulers of Jezreel' may have fled to Samaria.

2. *a fenced city*] Or, *fenced cities*. The Heb. singular may be taken as a collective. So LXX. Targ. Pesh. Vulg. As long as the capital held out for the house of Ahab, some other fortresses, e.g. Megiddo (v. 27), would probably do the same.

3. *and fight*] The message is a challenge.

5. *he that was over the household*] Cp. 1 K. iv. 6, note.

he that was over the city] This official is mentioned in 1 K. xxii. 26.

6. *take ye the heads*] Or, *bring ye the persons*. The command might be understood in the milder sense; Jehu deliberately gives an ambiguous order, knowing that it will be taken in the severer sense.

by to-morrow this time] Jehu allows no time for hesitation to arise.

baskets, and sent them unto him to Jezreel. And there 8
 came a messenger, and told him, saying, They have brought
 the heads of the king's sons. And he said, Lay ye them in
 two heaps at the entering in of the gate until the morning.
 And it came to pass in the morning, that he went out, and 9
 stood, and said to all the people, Ye be righteous: behold,
 I conspired against my master, and slew him: but who
 smote all these? Know now that there shall fall unto the 10
 earth nothing of the word of the LORD, which the LORD
 spake concerning the house of Ahab: for the LORD hath
 done that which he spake by his servant Elijah. So Jehu 11
 smote all that remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel,
 and all his great men, and his familiar friends, and his
 priests, until he left him none remaining. And he arose 12
 and departed, and went to Samaria. And as he was at the
 shearing house of the shepherds in the way, Jehu met with 13
 the brethren of Ahaziah king of Judah, and said, Who are
 ye? And they answered, We are the brethren of Ahaziah:
 and we go down to salute the children of the king and the

¹ Or, *house of gathering*

9. *and stood*] This expression taken together with the command to leave the heaps of heads *until the morning* (v. 8) shews that Jehu's action was deliberate. He wished the news of the massacre to spread so that there might be a great concourse of the people the next morning, and then he took up a conspicuous position and formally defended his own conduct.

Ye be righteous] Jehu calls on the people to judge righteously between him and his supposed accusers. Ahab, he says, was slain by one hand, his sons by another, but in each case the human hand was only an instrument of Divine vengeance (v. 10).

10. *by his servant Elijah*] Cp. 1 K. xxi. 21, 22.

11. *his priests*] Cp. 1 K. iv. 5, note.

12—14. THE SLAUGHTER OF THE KINSMEN OF AHAZIAH.

12. *and departed*] Read, *and came in*. Probably some words are missing at this point.

the shearing house] LXX. takes this as the proper name of some place (not yet identified) between Jezreel and Samaria.

13. *to salute*] Rather, *to ask after the welfare of*. The phrase suggests that these Judaeans had heard only vague rumours of the fate of Joram and Jezebel. Knowing that their own king was with Joram,

- 14 children of the queen. And he said, Take them alive. And they took them alive, and slew them at the ¹pit of the ²shearing house, even two and forty men; neither left he any of them.
- 15 And when he was departed thence, he lighted on Jehonadab the son of Rechab coming to meet him: and he saluted him, and said to him, Is thine heart right, as my heart is with thy heart? And Jehonadab answered, It is. If it be, give me thine hand. And he gave him his hand;
- 16 and he took him up to him into the chariot. And he said, Come with me, and see my zeal for the LORD. So they
- 17 made him ride in his chariot. And when he came to Samaria, he smote all that remained unto Ahab in Samaria, till he had destroyed him, according to the word of the
- 18 LORD, which he spake to Elijah. And Jehu gathered all the people together, and said unto them, Ahab served Baal

¹ Or, cistern

² Or, house of gathering

they were pressing on to Jezreel to learn the truth, when they were surprised and massacred by Jehu. The incident illustrates the ready ruthlessness of the usurper.

the children of the king] i.e. the king and his household, with special reference to the king himself.

the queen] Heb. *g'birak*. The queen-mother, Jezebel, is meant. Cp. 1 K. xv 13, note.

14. *Take them alive*] These orders were perhaps given in private; Jehu's object was that not one of them should take alarm and escape.

at the pit] Probably they were buried in this pit.

15 - 28. THE MASSACRE OF THE WORSHIPPERS OF BAAL.

15. *Jehonadab the son of Rechab*] From Jer. xxxv. it appears that this Jehonadab (Jonadab) commanded his clan, the Rechabites, to possess no land, to cultivate no vineyard, and to drink no wine. They were to be shepherds, like the earliest Israelites (Gen. xli. 31—34), not agriculturists like the Canaanites. In accordance with this manner of life they were out of sympathy with the Baal-religion, which was a kind of Nature-worship suited to tillers of the soil (cp. 1 K. xviii. 18, note on *Baalim*). Jehonadab was evidently a person of great importance.

he saluted him] Jehu saluted Jehonadab.

If it be] Jehu's words.

16. *see my zeal*] Rather, look upon (enjoy) my zeal. The Heb. construction is the same as in Ps. liv. 7.

a little; but Jehu shall serve him much. Now therefore 19
 call unto me all the prophets of Baal, all his worshippers,
 and all his priests; let none be wanting: for I have a great
 sacrifice *to do* to Baal; whosoever shall be wanting, he shall
 not live. But Jehu did it in subtilty, to the intent that
 he might destroy the worshippers of Baal. And Jehu said, 20
 Sanctify a solemn assembly for Baal. And they proclaimed it.
 And Jehu sent through all Israel: and all the worshippers 21
 of Baal came, so that there was not a man left that came
 not. And they came into the house of Baal; and the house
 of Baal was filled from one end to another. And he said 22
 unto him that was over the vestry, Bring forth vestments
 for all the worshippers of Baal. And he brought them forth
 vestments. And Jehu went, and Jehonadab the son of 23
 Rechab, into the house of Baal; and he said unto the
 worshippers of Baal, Search, and look that there be here
 with you none of the servants of the LORD, but the
 worshippers of Baal only. And they went in to offer 24
 sacrifices and burnt offerings. Now Jehu had appointed

18. *Ahab served Baal a little*] Ahab no doubt 'went halting'
 (1 K. xviii. 31), trying to combine the worship of JEHOVAH with that of
 Baal. On the one hand he reared up an altar for Baal and made the
 Asherah (1 K. xvi. 32, 33) but on the other hand he named his sons
 Ahaziah and Jehoram, names which are compounded with the name
 of JEHOVAH. Jezebel was the real supporter of Baal-worship. Cp.
 1 K. xviii. 19.

19. *all his worshippers*] These perhaps were few in number, for
 Joram (iii. 2) himself had taken active measures against Baal-worship.

20. *a solemn assembly*] Heb., *ḏqārāh*, as in Deut. xvi. 8; Joel i. 14.

21. *the house of Baal*] Most probably the worshippers were gathered
 in a courtyard surrounding the actual shrine.

from one end to another] LXX. renders literally, *mouth to mouth*;
 the worshippers were so crowded as to touch one another.

22. *the vestry*] Heb. *metāhāh*. The word occurs here only, and
 its meaning is doubtful. Perhaps it was usual for the congregation to
 wear special religious garments at the great festivals of Baal. Muslim
 pilgrims to Mecca put on a special dress called the *ihram* ('holy
 garment') on entering the sacred territory and put it off on quitting it.
 Everyday dress, if worn on such an occasion, would become *taboo* and
 useless for ordinary occasions.

23. *Search, and look*] The ostensible object of this search would be
 to exclude any who were not 'sanctified' (v. 20) from this solemn
 assembly. Cp. Exod. xix. 14, 15.

him fourscore men without, and said, If any of the men whom I bring into your hands escape, *he that letteth him go,*
 25 his life shall be for the life of him. And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the 'guard and to the captains, Go in, and slay them; let none come forth. And they smote them with the edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast them out, and went to the city of the house
 26 of Baal. And they brought forth the 'pillars that were in
 27 the house of Baal, and burned them. And they brake down the pillar of Baal, and brake down the house of Baal,
 28 and made it a draught house, unto this day. Thus Jehu
 29 destroyed Baal out of Israel. Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, 'wherewith he made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, *to wit,* the golden
 30 calves that were in Beth-el, and that were in Dan. And the LORD said unto Jehu, Because thou hast 'done well in

¹ Heb. *runners*

² Or, *obelisks*

³ Or, *who*

⁴ Or, *executed well*

24. *fourscore men without*] These were to cut down the fugitives who escaped from the guard and the captains (v. 25). Jehu was thorough in all that he undertook.

25. *the guard*] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 27, note.

the captains] Cp. vii. 2, note.

the city of the house of Baal] *The house of Baal* was not in Samaria itself; the city referred to was one which had grown up round *the house*.

26. *the pillars*] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 23. The fate of the 'pillar of Baal' is given in the following verse; it is better therefore to read *Asherah* here. The *Asherah* being of wood (Deut. xvi. 21) might be consumed by burning; the 'pillar' on the contrary was of stone, and had to be 'broken down.'

27. *made it a draught house*] Cp. Ezra vi. 11; Dan. ii. 5.

29—31. JEHU CLEAVES TO THE CALF-WORSHIP.

29. *the sins of Jeroboam*] In this Jehu followed the example of Baasha (1 K. xv. 34) and of Omri (1 K. xvi. 26).

30. *And the LORD said*] Whether God spoke by a prophet, or through a vision, is not said.

The dynasty ended with Zechariah the fourth in descent from Jehu.
 Cp. xv. 8—12.

executing that which is right in mine eyes, *and* hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy sons of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel. But Jehu took no heed to walk in the ³¹ law of the LORD, the God of Israel, with all his heart: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, wherewith he made Israel to sin.

In those days the LORD began to cut Israel short: and ³² Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel; from Jordan ³³ eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the valley of Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan. Now the ³⁴ rest of the acts of Jehu, and all that he did, and all his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jehu slept with his fathers: ³⁵ and they buried him in Samaria. And Jehoahaz his son reigned in his stead. And the time that Jehu reigned over ³⁶ Israel in Samaria was twenty and eight years.

Now when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her ¹¹

32—36. ISRAEL REDUCED TO STRAITS BY SYRIA.

32. *to cut Israel short*] The Heb. phrase *l'haqcoth beyisrael*, is difficult, and the meaning is not quite certain. Vulg. *taedere super Israel*, 'to be weary of Israel.' Similarly Targ. *the anger of the LORD began to be strong against Israel*.

Hazael] Cp. viii. 7—15.

the coasts] Cp. 1 K. i. 3, note.

33. *the land of Gilead*] Cp. 1 K. iv. 13, with the notes.

34. *and all his might*] LXX. adds, 'and the treason that he wrought.' Cp. 1 K. xvi. 20.

CII. XI. 1—3 (= 2 Chr. xxii. 10—12). ATHALIAH'S USURPATION.

1. *Athaliah*] Cp. viii. 18, 26. The king's mother (x. 13; xxiv. 15; 1 K. xv. 13) was nearly always a person of great influence in an Eastern court. In this case the death of the king at twenty-two or twenty-three years of age left an infant as the direct heir to the throne. Probably under these circumstances some more distant heir would have seized the crown, and Athaliah would have lost her position as 'queen.' Athaliah's massacre of the members of the royal house prevented this. As a daughter of Ahab she was perhaps also a daughter of Jezebel; in any case her vigour and unscrupulousness remind us of the Phœnician princess. Her task was the more easy since Jehu had destroyed forty-two of the 'brethren of Ahaziah' (x. 12—14).

- son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal.
- 2 But Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him away from among the king's sons that were slain, even him and his nurse, ¹and put them in the ²bedchamber; and they hid him
- 3 from Athaliah, so that he was not slain. And he was with her hid in the house of the LORD six years: and Athaliah reigned over the land.
- 4 And in the seventh year Jehoiada sent and fetched the captains over hundreds, of the ³Carites and of the ⁴guard, and brought them to him into the house of the LORD; and he made a covenant with them, and took an oath of them in the house of the LORD, and shewed them the king's son.
- 5 And he commanded them, saying, This is the thing that ye shall do: a third part of you, that come in on the

¹ Or, who were

² Or, executioners

³ Or, chamber for the beds

⁴ Heb. runners

2. *Jehosheba*] In Chron. *Jehoshabeath*, another form of the name, just as *Elisabeth* (Luko i. 7) is another form of *Elisheba* (Exod. vi. 23). Indeed since the prefixes *Jeho-* and *Eli-* both represent the Divine Name, all four may be counted as different forms of one name. In Chron. *Jehoshabeath* is said to have been the wife of Jehoiada the priest.

and put them *in the bedchamber*] The verb is wanting in the Heb. and LXX., but is found in the parallel passage of Chron. But it is better to read with the Vulg., *de triclinio*, '[stole them]...from the bed-chamber.'

4—16 (2 Chr. xxiii. 1—15). THE OVERTHROW OF ATHALIAH.

4. *the Carites*] These were probably foreigners retained in the royal service as guards. They are mentioned again only in *v.* 19 and in 2 Sam. xx. 23, where one reading of the Heb. (the *Kêthîb*) is, *Over the Carites (Cherethites according to the Kêri) and over the Pelethites. Carite and Cherethite* are probably different forms of the same name. Cp. 1 K. i. 38, note on *Cherethites and Pelethites*.

The Chronicler takes an entirely different view of the matter. He passes over the Carites and the guard, and assigns the part taken by them in the revolution to the Levites (2 Chr. xxiii. 2, 4, 7).

5. *This is the thing that ye shall do*] The royal guards appear to have been divided into three watches of eight hours each. When the watch came on duty at the palace at the beginning of the Sabbath, the other two watches who were off duty were to repair to the temple to act

sabbath, shall be keepers of the watch of the king's house; and a third part shall be at the gate Sur; and a third part 6 at the gate behind the guard: so shall ye keep the watch of the house, and be a barrier. And the two companies 7 of you, even all that go forth on the sabbath, shall keep the watch of the house of the LORD about the king. And 8 ye shall compass the king round about, every man with his weapons in his hand; and he that cometh within the ranks, let him be slain: and be ye with the king when he goeth out, and when he cometh in. And the captains over 9 hundreds did according to all that Jehoiada the priest commanded: and they took every man his men, those that were to come in on the sabbath, with those that were to go out on the sabbath, and came to Jehoiada the priest.

as a guard to the young king. In the meantime the watch on guard at the palace was to be divided into three bodies, two of which were to guard two of the gates of the palace, which are specified. The third body was to be stationed perhaps in the guard room ready to answer any call. The intention of the order described in v. 6 is uncertain. If the places assigned by Jehoiada were the usual ones, the intention would be to avoid arousing the queen's suspicions. If, however, the places were specially chosen by the priest, the object would probably be to prevent the queen's escape. In any case v. 6 deals with details; the main arrangements are sketched in vv. 5 and 7, i.e. a third of the Guard at the Palace as usual, and two thirds at the Temple to carry out the revolution.

6. *the gate Sur*] Probably the same as the *gate of the foundation* (2 Chr. xxiii. 5), the difference between the two words in Heb. being very slight (רִיד and רִיד').

the gate behind the guard] i.e. as Pesh. *the gate of the guard house*. In v. 19 it seems to be called *the gate of the guard*. Nothing is known of the arrangements of the palace, so that the position of this gate and of the last mentioned can only be guessed.

and be a barrier] The meaning of the Heb. word is uncertain, and the text is probably faulty.

7. *that go forth*] i.e. who are released from duty.

8. *within the ranks*] i.e. of the guard. Chron. has 'into the house,' i.e. of the LORD.

9. *Jehoiada the priest*] In v. 4 he is called simply *Jehoiada*, but the expression used there, 'brought them to him into the house of the LORD' implies that he held the priestly office. Jehoiada, though he was no doubt the chief priest, is called simply *the priest*, in agreement with the general usage of the books of Samuel and Kings. Cp. xii. 7; xvi. 10, 11, 15, 16; 1 Ki. i. 8, 26; ii. 26, 27; 1 Sam. i. 9. The title *chief priest* occurs xxv. 18.

10 And the priest delivered to the captains over hundreds the spears and shields that had been king David's, which were
 11 in the house of the LORD. And the guard stood, every man with his weapons in his hand, from the right side of the house to the left side of the house, along by the altar and
 12 the house, by the king round about. Then he brought out the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king.
 13 And when Athaliah heard the noise of the guard and of the people, she came to the people into the house of the
 14 LORD: and she looked, and, behold, the king stood by

¹ Heb. *shoulder* ² Or, *put upon him the crown and the testimony*

³ Heb. *Let the king live* ⁴ Or, *on the platform*

10. *the priest delivered*] The two watches of the guard who were off duty, had probably left their own weapons according to custom in the guard house. Cp. 1 K. xiv. 27, 28.

shields] Heb. *shēlātīm*. This word is always used in the plural like the common word *kēlīm*, 'weapons,' and it has probably, like *kēlīm*, a general sense. In Jer. li. 11 marg. it is rendered 'suits of armour.' Perhaps 'equipment' would be the best equivalent. Ancient authorities display great uncertainty. LXX. gives *χλιδώνας*, 'bracelets' (2 Sam. viii. 7), *κλοιούς*, 'collars' (1 Chr. xviii. 7), *τρισοῦς*, 'tridents' (here), *φάρετρας*, 'quivers' (Ezek. xxvii. 11), and *δπλα*, 'shields' or 'armour' (2 Chr. xxiii. 9). Vulg. *arma, pharetras, peltas*.

that had been king David's] They were perhaps the spoils of war. Cp. 2 Sam. viii. 10, 11.

12. *put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony*] Better as marg., *put upon him the crown and the testimony*. The *testimony* was probably some document or charter specifying the ancient customs of the kingdom. Cp. Deut. xvii. 18; 1 Sam. x. 25. The king by wearing this document at his coronation consented to observe its contents. The wearing of an inscription or of a document on a solemn occasion is quite in accordance with Eastern ideas. Cp. Exod. xxviii. 29, 36 ff.; Deut. vi. 6—8; Job xxxi. 35, 36. General Chesney (*Narrative of the Euphrates Expedition*, London, 1868, p. 73) narrates that when he presented the Sultan's firman to a certain sheikh, the sheikh and his Arab guests placed it on their heads as an acknowledgement of duty and a token of respect. A similar incident is recorded (on p. 425 of the same work) of the great Reshid Pasha, governor of Asia Minor in 1835. The text agrees with 2 Chr. xxiii. 11. Wellhausen's emendation ('bracelets' for 'testimony') cannot be justified.

God save the king] For this salutation cp. 1 K. i. 25, note.

13. *into the house of the LORD*] The guard allowed her to come within their barrier.

the pillar, as the manner was, and the captains and the trumpets by the king; and all the people of the land rejoiced, and blew with trumpets. Then Athaliah rent her clothes, and cried, Treason, treason. And Jehoiada the priest commanded the captains of hundreds that were set over the host, and said unto them, Have her forth between the ranks; and him that followeth her slay with the sword: for the priest said, Let her not be slain in the house of the LORD. So they made way for her; and she went by the way of the horses' entry to the king's house: and there was she slain.

And Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD and the king and the people, that they should be the LORD's people; between the king also and the people. And all the people of the land went to the house of Baal, and brake it down; his altars and his images brake they in pieces thoroughly, and slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. And the priest appointed officers over the house

¹ Heb. *offices*

14. *by the pillar*] Cp. xxiii. 3.
as the manner was] Joash stood in the place usually occupied by the king. Chron. *at the entrance*, a less probable reading.

15. *him that followeth her*] The priest feared mob violence within the temple.

16. *they made way for her*] A.V. *they laid hands upon her*, but this rendering, though supported by LXX. Vulg. is wrong.

17—21. THE COVENANT.

17. *made a covenant*] Heb. *made the covenant*, i.e. renewed the covenant.

18. *the people of the land*] Cp. v. 14; xv. 5; xvi. 15; xxi. 24; xxiii. 30. The phrase designates the people as distinguished from their rulers. In later Hebrew it is used contemptuously.

the house of Baal] The building of this house is not recorded in Kings, but it is said of Jehoram, the husband of Athaliah, that 'he walked in the way of the kings of Israel' (viii. 18), and of Ahaziah, the son of Athaliah, that 'he walked in the way of the house of Ahab' (viii. 27). From these two statements, read in their context, we cannot doubt that Baal worship was allowed in Judah under these two kings.

before the altars] This detail illustrates the headlong zeal of the people (for the time) against foreign worship.

appointed officers] It was necessary now to watch lest some injury

19 of the LORD. And he took the captains over hundreds, and the Carites, and the guard, and all the people of the land; and they brought down the king from the house of the LORD, and came by the way of the gate of the guard unto the king's house. And he sat on the throne of the
 20 kings. So all the people of the land rejoiced, and the city was quiet: and they slew Athaliah with the sword at the king's house.

21 Jehoash was seven years old when he began to reign.
 12 In the seventh year of Jehu began Jehoash to reign; and he reigned forty years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name
 2 was Zibiah of Beer-sheba. And Jehoash did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD all his days wherein
 3 Jehoiada the priest instructed him. Howbeit the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places.

should be inflicted on the Temple in revenge by the defeated worshippers of Baal.

19. *the Carites*] Vulg. (here) *Cerethi et Pholethi*, i.e. 'the Cherethites and Pelethites.' Cp. v. 4, note.

the gate of the guard] In 2 Chr. xxiii. 20 it is called *the upper gate*, for which cp. xv. 35, note.

CH. XI. 21—XII. 3. JEHOASH BEGINS TO REIGN.

21. *Jehoash*] Another form of *Joash*; cp. *Jehoram* and *Joram*.

CH. XII.

1. *Zibiah*] The name of the king's mother is regularly given in the case of the kings of Judah. Cp. xiv. 2; xv. 2, 33; xviii. 2; xxi. 1; xxii. 1, 19; xxiii. 31, 36; xxiv. 8, 18. The mothers of kings were important persons. Cp. 1 K. xv. 13.

2. *all his days wherein Jehoiada...instructed him*] The Heb. text is better rendered, *all his days, because Jehoiada...taught him*, but this rendering cannot be reconciled with 2 Chr. xxiv. 17—22, which says that Joash allowed the practice of idolatry after Jehoiada's death. But the correct reading of the Hebrew may be *all the days that Jehoiada instructed him*, and if it be so, the discrepancy with Chron. is removed. The difference lies in one Heb. consonant.

3. *the high places were not taken away*] Cp. 1 K. iii. 2; xv. 14, note.

And Jehoash said to the priests, All the money of the 4
hallowed things that is brought into the house of the LORD,
in current money, the money of the persons for whom
each man is rated, and all the money that it cometh into
any man's heart to bring into the house of the LORD, let 5
the priests take it to them, every man from his acquaint-
ance: and they shall repair the breaches of the house,
wheresoever any breach shall be found. But it was so, that 6
in the three and twentieth year of king Jehoash the priests
had not repaired the breaches of the house. Then king 7

¹ Or, even *the money* of every one that passeth the numbering See Ex. xxx. 13 ² Heb. *each man the money of the souls of his estimation* See Lev. xxvii. 2

4-16 (= 1 Chr. xxiv. 4-14). THE HOUSE OF THE LORD
REPAIRED.

4. *All the money*] Money might come to the Temple in three different ways: (1) as the price of something vowed and redeemed for a price in ready money, Lev. xxvii. 11, 12; (2) as poll-tax payable for every male Israelite, Exod. xxx. 11-16; (3) as a free-will offering. Jehoash here assigns to the priests the money obtained from all sources, on condition that they themselves repair the Temple.

the hallowed things] i.e. the things vowed as *Holy to the LORD*.

current money] The Heb. word *keseph*, 'money,' means properly 'silver,' and there is nothing to suggest that coined money is meant here. According to the evidence available at present the earliest attempts at coining money are to be attributed to Gyges king of Lydia¹, circ. 700 B.C. Before his time the precious metals were made up into ingots in order that they might serve as currency. The ingots were weighed when the money changed hands. Cp. 1 K. xx. 39, 'Thou shall pay (lit. thou shall weigh) a talent of silver.' The purity of the metal composing these ingots varied with the honesty of those who cast them. In the Tell-el-Amarna letters Burnahuryash complains that the king of Egypt had sent him 20 minas of gold which shrank to 5 minas when tested. See Hastings' *Dictionary*, article MONEY by A. R. S. Kennedy. Marg. gives an inferior rendering.

5. *every man from his acquaintance*] The Heb. word rendered *acquaintance* is found here only, and the sense is uncertain.

6. *in the three and twentieth year...the priests had not repaired*] How long this neglect had continued cannot be gathered from the present text, but probably some statement of time was given in the original text of v. 4, which would shew this. The Chronicler assigns the blame differently; the Levites would not make a collection in the cities of Judah.

¹ See Herodotus, i. 94.

Jehoash called for Jehoiada the priest, and for the *other* priests, and said unto them, Why repair ye not the breaches of the house? now therefore take no *more* money from your acquaintance, but deliver it for the breaches of the house.

8 And the priests consented that they should take no *more* money from the people, neither repair the breaches of the house.

9 But Jehoiada the priest took a chest, and bored a hole in the lid of it, and set it beside the altar, on the right side as one cometh into the house of the LORD: and the priests that kept the ¹door put therein all the money that

10 was brought into the house of the LORD. And it was so, when they saw that there was much money in the chest, that the king's ²scribe and the high priest came up, and they ³put up in bags and told the money that was found

¹ Heb. *threshold* ² Or, *secretary* ³ Heb. *bound up and &c.*

8. *And the priests consented*] This record of the priests' consent is evidently intended as an important state memorandum. It is probable that the priests were in the habit of receiving 'the money of the hallowed things' *before* Jehoash assigned it to them. But the people, it seems, did not acquiesce in this practice, and there was a standing dispute on the subject. Jehoash made a settlement for a time by a compromise, that the priests should take the money, and also be responsible for the repair of the house. When, however, the priests failed in their duty, they were put at a moral disadvantage, and Jehoash took the opportunity of settling the question finally by deciding against the claim of the priests, and constraining them to agree to his decision.

9. *chest*] LXX. *κισθηρον*. The word is used for the *ark* of the covenant, 1 K. viii. 4, *al.*

beside the altar] The position of the chest suggested that the money put in was of the nature of an offering.

the priests that kept the door] Cp. xi. 18 (note); xxv. 18; Ps. lxxxiv. 10 (with marg.).

10. *the king's scribe*] Cp. 1 K. iv. 3, note.

they put up in bags] Heb. *bound up* (without mention of bags). In ancient Egypt money existed in the form of rings of metal, which could be threaded on a cord, and so bound up. 'Bundles of money' are spoken of in Gen. xlii. 35; and there can be no doubt that ring-money was in use (but not in exclusive use) among the Hebrews. Of course bundles of money might be put into bags (v. 23).

told] Cp. Gen. xv. 5; Ps. xxii. 17.

in the house of the LORD. And they gave the money that 11 was weighed out into the hands of them that did the work, that had the oversight of the house of the LORD: and they 1 paid it out to the carpenters and the builders, that wrought upon the house of the LORD, and to the masons and the 12 hewers of stone, and for buying timber and hewn stone to repair the breaches of the house of the LORD, and for all that 3 was laid out for the house to repair it. But there were not 13 made for the house of the LORD cups of silver, snuffers, basons, trumpets, any vessels of gold, or vessels of silver, of the money that was brought into the house of the LORD: for they gave that to them that did the work, and repaired 14 therewith the house of the LORD. Moreover they reckoned 15 not with the men, into whose hand they delivered the money to give to them that did the work: for they dealt faithfully. The money for the guilt offerings, and the money 16 for the sin offerings, was not brought into the house of the LORD: it was the priests'.

¹ Heb. *brought it forth*

² Heb. *went forth*

11. *that did the work*] Not the handicraftsmen, as the succeeding words shew, but the superintendents of the work. The intention is to make it clear that the money did not go, as before, to the priests.

13. *there were not made*] In 2 Chr. xxiv. 14 it is said that vessels were made with the money left over after the building work was finished.

cups...snuffers, basons, trumpets] In a similar enumeration of the vessels in 1 K. vii. 50 *spoons* and *firepans* take the place of *trumpets*. The *cups* and *basons* were both used for receiving the blood of the sacrificial victim. Cp. Exod. xii. 22 (for *bason* read *cup*); and for *basons* (Heb. *misrākōth*) see 1 K. vii. 45, note. For *trumpets* (Heb. *hāçōfrāh*) see Num. x. 1—10, especially v. 10, 'In your set feasts, and in the beginnings of your months, ye shall blow with the trumpets over your burnt offerings.'

15. *to give to them that did the work*] This clause is tautological and is probably a gloss. The men *that did the work* are to be identified (v. 11) with the men *that had the oversight*.

16. *the guilt offerings*] Heb. *āshām*. Lev. v. 15—19.

the sin offerings] Heb. *hattā'ōth*. Lev. iv. 22—35.

it was the priests'] Lev. vii. 7.

17—21 (2 Chr. xxiv. 23—27). THE END OF THE REIGN OF JEHOASH.

The Chronicler gives here a narrative, which is absent from Kings, to the effect that after the death of Jehoiada, Jehoash was persuaded by

17 Then Hazael king of Syria went up, and fought against Gath, and took it: and Hazael set his face to go up to
 18 Jerusalem. And Jehoash king of Judah took all the hallowed things that Jehoshaphat, and Jehoram, and Ahaziah, his fathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own hallowed things, and all the gold that was found in the treasures of the house of the LORD, and of the king's house, and sent it to Hazael king of Syria: and he went away from Jerusalem. Now the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of
 20 the kings of Judah? And his servants arose, and made a conspiracy, and smote Joash at the house of Millo, *on*
 21 *the way that goeth down to Silla*. For Jozacar the son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad the son of Shomer, his servants, smote him, and he died; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Amaziah his son reigned in his stead.

13 In the three and twentieth year of Joash the son of the princes of Judah to sanction idolatrous worship. When Zechariah the son of Jehoiada stood up as a prophet, the narrative continues, and rebuked the idolaters, he was stoned at the bidding of the king.

17. *Hazael*] Cp. xiii. 3, and vi. 24, note.

Gath] Cp. 1 K. ii. 39, note. Hazael began his wars against Israel by smiting the whole land east of Jordan in the days of Jehu (xii. 32, 33). He continued his wars against Israel under Jehu's son Jehoahaz, probably making the land west of Jordan suffer. In the expedition here mentioned he must have crossed Israel from East to West before descending upon Gath.

18. *took all the hallowed things*] The Temple treasures were taken or extorted on several occasions: xvi. 8 (sent to Assyria by Ahaz); xviii. 15, 16 (surrendered to the king of Assyria by Hezekiah); xxiv. 13 (seized by Nebuchadnezzar); 1 K. xiv. 26 (seized by Shishak).

20. *at the house of Millo*] Probably the place called *Millo* in 1 K. ix. 15 (see note there). The Chronicler perhaps misread this word for *mittah*, 'bed,' for he says that the conspirators slew Jehoash 'upon his bed.' The words which follow ('on the way that goeth down to Silla') are probably corrupt.

CH. XIII. 1—9. THE REIGN OF JEHOAHAZ OVER ISRAEL.

1. *in the three and twentieth year*] Joash's predecessor, Athaliah, reigned six years (xi. 3, 4), so that according to the usual Hebrew (inclusive) reckoning Jehu must have reigned 29 years. Only 28 however are assigned him in x. 36.

Ahaziah, king of Judah, Jehoahaz the son of Jehu began to reign over Israel in Samaria, *and reigned* seventeen years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, ² and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, where-with he made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and ³ he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, and into the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael, ⁴ continually. And Jehoahaz besought the LORD, and the LORD ⁵ hearkened unto him: for he saw the oppression of Israel, how that the king of Syria oppressed them. (And the LORD ⁶ gave Israel a saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as beforetime. Nevertheless they departed not ⁶

¹ Heb. *all the days*

2. *the sins*] Jeroboam's 'sins' were (1) the calf-worship; (2) the irregular priesthood; (3) the irregular annual feast; 1 K. xii. 28-33. But the three might be spoken of as one (1 K. xv. 34).

3. *the anger of the LORD was kindled*] The sin referred to existed already in the reign of Jehu, and the punishment also began in that reign. Cp. x. 31-33.

continually] Cp. v. 22, *all the days of Jehoahaz*, which is perhaps too general a statement to be taken literally. The sense is probably, *year after year*. Cp. Jud. vi. 1, 3, 4.

4. *And Jehoahaz besought the LORD*] For the form of expression cp. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 12. In vv. 4-7 the author of Kings has plainly given an abbreviated text of the document which lay before him, and the connexion has been thereby obscured. But E. V. is clearly wrong in placing the mark of a parenthesis before v. 5. V. 5 is the continuation of v. 4; Jehoahaz made supplication, *and* the LORD heard him, *and* the LORD gave Israel a saviour. This saviour is not named. He is not to be identified in this passage with Joash the son and successor of Jehoahaz (vv. 22-25), and still less with Jeroboam his grandson (xiv. 25-27), for the 'salvation' evidently took place under Jehoahaz. Further, the context (vv. 6, 7) suggests that the relief was only temporary. Such a temporary deliverance in the reign of Jehoahaz himself was probably effected by the expedition of Adad-nirari III. of Assyria against Damascus about the year 803 B.C., when the Assyrian king received tribute from several Syrian states and blockaded Damascus (Schrader, *K.A.T.*, ed. 3, page 260).

5. *dwelt in their tents*] A metaphorical expression denoting a state of peace. The Israelites were able to live at home; they were no longer forced into hiding places (Jud. vi. 2; 1 Sam. xiii. 6).

6. *Nevertheless they departed not*] This verse is rightly taken as parenthetical; Israel, though saved, did not return to JEHOVAH.

from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, wherewith he made Israel to sin, but ¹walked therein: and there remained the
 7 (Asherah also in Samaria.) For he left not to Jehoahaz of the people save fifty horsemen, and ten chariots, and ten thousand footmen; for the king of Syria destroyed them,
 8 and made them like the dust ²in threshing. Now the rest of the acts of Jehoahaz, and all that he did, and his might, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the
 9 kings of Israel? And Jehoahaz slept with his fathers; and they buried him in Samaria: and Joash his son reigned in his stead.

10 In the thirty and seventh year of Joash king of Judah began Jehoash the son of Jehoahaz to reign over Israel in
 11 Samaria, and reigned sixteen years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he
 12 made Israel to sin: but he walked therein. Now the rest of the acts of Joash, and all that he did, and his might wherewith he fought against Amaziah king of Judah, are

¹ Heb. *he walked*

² Or, *to trample on*

but walked therein] Heb. *he (Jehoahaz) walked*. The statement is usually made of a king, not of the people.

there remained the Asherah] Possibly the Asherah set up by Ahab (1 K. xvi. 33), for it is not said that Jehu destroyed it when he rooted the worship of Baal out of Israel; but cp. x. 26, note on *the pillars*. For *Asherah* see 1 K. xiv. 23, note.

7. *For he left not*] The *For* takes up the thread of vv. 3, 4.

8. *Now the rest &c.*] This verse repeats the formula used of Jehu in x. 34; it is official language, and so it is not necessary to discuss the question whether the expression, *his might*, is strictly applicable to Jehoahaz.

10—13. SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF JEHOASH OVER ISRAEL.

The reign of Jehoash is narrated in two extracts, the first, with purely formal details, from the state chronicles (vv. 10—13), the second, in which the king is associated with Elisha the prophet, from (it would seem) some biography of Elisha (vv. 14—25).

10. *In the thirty and seventh year*] If Jehoahaz began to reign in the twenty-third year of Joash of Judah and reigned seventeen years (cp. v. 1), Jehoash of Israel cannot have begun to reign before the thirty-ninth or fortieth year of Jehoash of Judah. *Thirty-ninth* would also agree better with the statement of xiv. 1.

they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Joash slept with his fathers; and Jeroboam 13 sat upon his throne: and Joash was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel.

Now Elisha was fallen sick of his sickness whereof he 14 died: and Joash the king of Israel came down unto him, and wept over ¹him, and said, My father, my father, the ²chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof! And Elisha 15 said unto him, Take bow and arrows: and he took unto him bow and arrows. And he said to the king of Israel, 16 Put thine hand upon the bow: and he put his hand *upon it*. And Elisha laid his hands upon the king's hands. And he 17 said, Open the window eastward: and he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot: and he shot. And he said, The LORD's arrow of ³victory, even the arrow of ³victory ⁴over Syria: for thou shalt smite the Syrians in Aphek, till thou have consumed them. And he said, Take the arrows: and he took them. 18 And he said unto the king of Israel, Smite upon the ground: and he smote thrice, and stayed. And the man of God was 19

¹ Heb. *his face*² Or, *chariot*³ Heb. *salvation*⁴ Or, *against*

14—19. THE DEATHBED OF ELISHA.

14. *My father*] Cp. ii. 12, note.

the chariots of Israel and the horsemen thereof!] The king salutes the prophet as the great defence of Israel against the Syrians. Cp. vi. 8—vii. 16.

15. *bow and arrows*] The bow was the national weapon (Hos. i. 5).

17. *Open the window*] i.e. remove the shutter or lattice work.

Then Elisha said, Shoot: and he shot] This clause is not found in LXX. (B); it is perhaps an interpolation.

The LORD's arrow of victory] Lit. *An arrow of deliverance for the LORD!* The form of the phrase is the same as in Jud. vii. 20, 'A sword for the LORD!' It is short for, *Shoot now an arrow of deliverance &c.*

in Aphek] See 1 K. xx. 26, note. *Aphek* seems to be the name of a district as well as of a town.

till thou have consumed them] In v. 19 the prophet seems to take this promise back. Prophetic promises are conditional.

19. *the man of God was wrath*] Elisha reads the king's character in the king's actions; he misses in it the signs of a whole hearted obedience to the God of Israel.

wroth with him, and said, Thou shouldest have smitten five or six times; then hadst thou smitten Syria till thou hadst consumed it: whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.

20 And Elisha died, and they buried him. Now the bands of the Moabites invaded the land at the coming in of the 21 year. And it came to pass, as they were burying a man, that, behold, they spied a band; and they cast the man into the sepulchre of Elisha: and as soon as the man touched the bones of Elisha, he revived, and stood up on his feet.

22 And Hazael king of Syria oppressed Israel all the days 23 of Jehoahaz. But the LORD was gracious unto them, and had compassion on them, and had respect unto them, because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and would not destroy them, neither cast he them from his

¹ Heb. *when the man went and touched*

20, 21. THE REVIVAL OF A DEAD MAN THROUGH THE BONES OF ELISHA.

20. *they buried him*] The place of his burial is not stated, though this particular is usually given in cases in which the fact of burial is mentioned. The narrative has perhaps been shortened.

the bands of the Moabites] Cp. xxiv. 2. Marauding bands (Heb. *gēdūd*, cp. Gen. xlix. 19, R. V. marg.) acting perhaps nominally in the interest of the Syrians, who were at war with Israel. LXX. *μορδῶνται* *Mordō*, 'marauders of Moab.'

invaded] Better, *used to invade*.

at the coming in of the year] The Heb. phrase is ungrammatical, and the text is perhaps corrupted, but the general sense given in the R. V. agrees with the LXX. and is probably correct.

21. *as soon as the man touched*] A correct paraphrase. See Eccles xlvi. 13, 14.

22—25. THE SYRIANS CHECKED.

22. *all the days of Jehoahaz*] i.e. all the days that Hazael and Jehoahaz were contemporary. Some relief came after Hazael's death. Cp. vv. 3—5 with the notes.

23. *had respect unto them*] Lit. *looked upon them*, LXX. *ἐπέβλεψεν ἐπ' αὐτοὺς*. Cp. 2 Sam. ix. 8; Luke ix. 38.

with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob] Cp. Exod. xxxii. 13.

presence ¹as yet. And Hazael king of Syria died; and ²⁴ Ben-hadad his son reigned in his stead. And Jehoash the ²⁵ son of Jehoahaz took again out of the hand of Ben-hadad the son of Hazael the cities which he had taken out of the hand of Jehoahaz his father by war. Three times did Joash smite him, and recovered the cities of Israel.

In the second year of Joash son of Joahaz king of Israel ¹⁴ began Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah to reign. He was twenty and five years old when he began to reign; ² and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jehoaddin of Jerusalem. And he did ³ that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, yet not like David his father: he did according to all that Joash his father had done. Howbeit the high places were not taken ⁴ away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places. And it came to pass, as soon as the kingdom ⁵

¹ Heb. *until now*

cast...from his presence] Cp. xvii. 20; xxiv. 20; Jer. vii. 15. The style of the compiler, whose words we have here, resembles that of Deuteronomy and Jeremiah.

as yet] See xvii. 18, 20, 23.

²⁴ *Ben-hadad*] He was probably contemporary with Jehoahaz for a year or two. Cp. v. 3; vi. 24, note.

²⁵ *the cities*] Cp. x. 32, 33.

Three times] Cp. v. 19.

did Joash smite him] Syria was no doubt weakened at this time by the pressure of the Assyrians from the East. Cp. *vv.* 4, 5, note.

CH. XIV. 1—7 (= 2 Chr. xxv. 1—13). THE REIGN OF AMAZIAH OVER JUDAH.

1. *In the second year*] Cp. xiii. 10, note.

2. *Jehoaddin*] So the *Kethib*. A.V. following the *Keri* has *Jehoaddan* in agreement with 2 Chr. xxv. 1.

of Jerusalem] For this somewhat strange designation cp. xv. 2. We should rather expect the mention of her father's name as in xv. 33; xviii. 2.

3. *not like David*] Contrast xviii. 3 (spoken of Hezekiah).

Joash] Cp. xii. 2, 3.

4. *Howbeit &c.*] This verse agrees word for word with xii. 3.

was established in his hand, that he slew his servants which
 6 had slain the king his father: but the children of the
 murderers he put not to death: according to that which is
 written in the book of the law of Moses, as the LORD com-
 manded, saying, The fathers shall not be put to death for
 the children, nor the children be put to death for the
 7 fathers; but every man shall die for his own sin. He slew
 of Edom in the Valley of Salt ten thousand, and took ¹Sela
 by war, and called the name of it Joktheel, unto this day.

¹ Or, *the rock*

5. *his servants*] He retained his father's murderers in their offices allowing them to serve under himself, until he was strong enough to put them to death.

6. *the children of the murderers*] Children were not unfrequently put to death with their fathers. Cp. 1 K. xxi. 14, note.
in the book] Cp. 1 K. ii. 3.

The fathers shall not &c.] Deut. xxiv. 16.

7. *the Valley of Salt*] 2 Sam. viii. 13; Ps. lx. (Heading). Here David won a victory over Edom. The 'valley' is probably to be identified with the marshy flat at the south end of the Dead Sea. This flat is dominated by the *Jebel Usdum* a hill consisting 'almost entirely of pure crystallised salt' (Baedeker, *Palestine*, p. 143).

Sela] Isa. xvi. 1. *Sela* means 'rock,' and so corresponds with *Petra*, hence LXX. gives τὴν πέτραν, but it is not certain that the well-known *Petra* (situated 50 miles south of the Valley of Salt) is meant here. Certainly the town known as *Joktheel* to the writer of Josh. xv. 38 was in the south-west of Judah near Lachish, and so far away from *Petra*.

8-16 (= 2 Chr. xxv. 17-24). THE TRIUMPH OF JEHOASH OF ISRAEL OVER AMAZIAH.

This passage, as vv. 15, 16 shew, has been extracted from the chronicles of the kings of Israel. The defiant message of Amaziah is introduced here with extreme abruptness. No hint is given of the events which led to the challenge. But the book of Chronicles indicates the cause of the quarrel (2 Chr. xxv. 6-10, 13). Amaziah doubting his own power to overcome Edom hired an Ephraimite (Israelite) army of auxiliaries. Afterwards on the remonstrance of a prophet he dismissed this force, and went to the war without it. Thereupon the mercenaries, disappointed of Edomite plunder, consoled themselves with the spoil of several Judæan cities, and when once the spirit of rapine had broken out, did not spare some of their own towns. Cp. 2 Chr. xxv. 13, 'from Samaria even unto Beth-horon.' Both kingdoms suffered, but the exact share of blame was difficult to allot. Here was matter for a bitter quarrel.

Then Amaziah sent messengers to Jehoash, the son of 8
 Jehoabaz son of Jehu, king of Israel, saying, Come, let us
 look one another in the face. And Jehoash the king of 9
 Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, The ¹thistle
 that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon,
 saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there
 passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trode
 down the thistle. Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and 10
 thine heart hath lifted thee up: glory thereof, and abide at
 home; for why shouldst thou ²meddle to thy hurt, that
 thou shouldst fall, even thou, and Judah with thee? But 11
 Amaziah would not hear. So Jehoash king of Israel went
 up; and he and Amaziah king of Judah looked one another
 in the face at Beth-shemesh, which belongeth to Judah.
 And Judah was put to the worse before Israel; and they 12
 fled every man to his tent. And Jehoash king of Israel 13
 took Amaziah king of Judah, the son of Jehoash the
 son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh, and came to Jerusalem,

¹ Or, thorn² Or, provoke calamity

8. *let us look one another in the face*] The meaning of this phrase is not certain. It is usually understood as a challenge to fight, but it may be no more than a claim to be admitted as an equal to a conference on the matter in dispute. Jehoash whose kingdom was three times as large as that of Amaziah treats the message with disdain. He probably looked upon Judah as an appendage of the kingdom of Israel.

10. *glory thereof*] Vulg. *contentus esto gloria* (a good paraphrase).

meddle to thy hurt] Better as marg., *provoke calamity*.

11. *Beth-shemesh*] This was one of the cities which marked the course of the western boundary of the territory of the tribe of Judah (Josh. xv. 10). Its site is probably marked by the modern *Ain Shems*, which is situated about 15 miles due west of Jerusalem, just where the wādi es-Surar opens out into a basin to receive two tributary wādīs. It is a well watered spot suited for the meeting place of two armies. The wādi es-Surar would give comparatively easy access for Jehoash's army to Jerusalem after the victory. An advance on Jerusalem directly from the north offers many serious difficulties to an army. On the site cp. G. A. Smith, *Hist. Geography*, pages 218 f.

12. *to his tent*] Another reading of the Heb. is *to his tents*. Cp. 2 Sam. xviii. 17. A rich man would own several tents; his chief wife would have one to herself (Gen. xxiv. 67). The expression *tent* or *tents* is of course to be understood metaphorically as meaning *home*. Cp. xiii. 5, note.

- and brake down the wall of Jerusalem from the gate of
 14 Ephraim unto the corner gate, four hundred cubits. And
 he took all the gold and silver, and all the vessels that were
 found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of
 the king's house, the hostages also, and returned to Samaria.
 15 Now the rest of the acts of Jehoash which he did, and his
 might, and how he fought with Amaziah king of Judah, are
 they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings
 16 of Israel? And Jehoash slept with his fathers, and was
 buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel; and Jeroboam
 his son reigned in his stead.
 17 And Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah lived
 after the death of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel
 18 fifteen years. Now the rest of the acts of Amaziah, are they
 not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings
 19 of Judah? And they made a conspiracy against him
 in Jerusalem; and he fled to Lachish: but they sent after
 20 him to Lachish, and slew him there. And they brought
 him upon horses: and he was buried at Jerusalem with his
 21 fathers in the city of David. And all the people of Judah

13. *the gate of Ephraim*] Mentioned Neh. viii. 16; xii. 39. Its site is unknown, but it was probably on the north or north-west of the city. Cp. C. R. Conder in *Hastings' Dictionary*, II. 593 a.

the corner gate] Mentioned 2 Chr. xxvi. 9; Jer. xxxi. 38; Zech. xiv. 10. It is supposed to have stood on the west of the city.

17—20 (= 2 Chr. xxv. 25—28). THE END OF AMAZIAH.

19. *they made a conspiracy*] As against Athaliah (xi. 4 ff.), and against Joash (xii. 20 f.).

Lachish] See xviii. 17; xix. 8; Josh. x. 3. The site is probably to be identified with the mound called *Tell-el-Hesi* about 35 miles south-west of Jerusalem. In this mound traces of a city, or rather of a succession of cities, have been found, the earliest dating apparently from circ. 1700 B.C. Remains of very thick walls were discovered at the explorations of Flinders Petrie and F. J. Bliss. See Bliss, *A Mound of many cities*.

20. *buried at Jerusalem*] Cp. xii. 21. The assassinated kings were buried with respect.

21, 22 (2 Chr. xxvi. 1, 2). AZARIAH (UZZIAH) SUCCEEDS.

The account of the reign of Azariah is given in xv. 1—7.

21. *all the people of Judah*] The popular feeling was perhaps against the assassins.

took ¹Azariah, who was sixteen years old, and made him king in the room of his father Amaziah. He built Elath, ²² and restored it to Judah, after that the king slept with his fathers.

In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king ²³ of Judah Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, *and reigned* forty and one years. And ²⁴ he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin. He restored the ²⁵ border of Israel from the entering in of Hamath unto the sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant. Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher. For the LORD saw the affliction of Israel, that it ²⁶

¹ In ch. xv. 13, and ² Chr. xxvi. 1, *Uzziah*

^{22.} *He built*] This word often implies *rebuilding* and *fortifying* (1 K. xii. 25). It is probably the case here.

Elath] Also called *Eloth*. Cp. 1 K. ix. 26, note.

after that the king slept with his fathers] The king here referred to is probably the king of Israel, Jeroboam the son of Joash. This method of dating is only an extension of the system by which the accession of a king of Judah is regularly dated by the regnal year of a king of Israel. Jeroboam's name has fallen out of the text through scribal error. Cp. v. 28, note.

23—29 (no parallel in Chron.). THE REIGN OF JEROBOAM
THE SON OF JOASH OVER ISRAEL.

^{25.} *He restored*] Rather, **He it was who restored.**

the entering in of Hamath] Cp. 1 K. viii. 65; note.

the sea of the Arabah] Cp. Deut. iii. 17, where the course of the river Jordan is described as 'from Chinnereth (i.e. the lake of Galilee) even unto the sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea' (i.e. the Dead Sea). Cp. also Josh. iii. 16. For *Arabah* cp. xxv. 4, note.

Jonah] This Jonah must have prophesied against Damascus and against the Syrians, who were then the enemies of Israel. The book of Jonah on the other hand gives the account of a prophecy against Nineveh and the Assyrians, who became the enemies of Israel after Jeroboam's death.

Gath-hepher] Not mentioned in the book of Jonah. According to Josh. xix. 13 it was in Zebulun. It has been identified with the modern el-Meshhed about a mile and a half south-west of Kefr Kenna (Cana of Galilee).

^{26.} *the affliction*] Or, *the low estate*, LXX. *ταπεινωσις*, as in Luke i. 48.

was very bitter: for there was none shut up nor left at large,
 27 neither was there any helper for Israel. And the LORD said
 not that he would blot out the name of Israel from under
 heaven: but he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam the
 28 son of Joash. Now the rest of the acts of Jeroboam, and
 all that he did, and his might, how he warred, and how
 he recovered Damascus, and Hamath, *which had belonged*
 to Judah, for Israel, are they not written in the book of the

there was none shut up nor left at large] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 10, note. The Hebrew phrase (*shut up and left at large*) appears in the book of the Revelation in slightly varying forms: vi. 15, 'every bondman and freeman'; xiii. 16, 'the free and the bond'; xix. 18, 'all men both free and bond.'

27. *by the hand of Jeroboam the son of Joash*] The words acknowledge as a principle that God sometimes works out His will through the instrumentality of evil men. Jeroboam was a patron of the calf-worship (v. 24), and he brought himself under the denunciations of the prophet Amos (Amos vii. 9 ff.), yet the historian does not shrink from describing him in reference to the Syrian oppression as a God-sent saviour. Cp. the narrative of Ahab's victory (or two victories) in 1 K. xx.

28. *how he warred, and how he recovered Damascus, and Hamath, which had belonged to Judah, for Israel*] These words seem to be parallel with v. 25, but they raise certain difficulties of their own. In the first place the historical evidence is against the statement that Jeroboam 'recovered Damascus.' It seems rather to be the case that the Syrians held their capital until it fell into the hands of the Assyrians under Tiglath-pileser III. in 733,2 B.C. Cp. xvi. 9. The statement that Jeroboam 'recovered Hamath' is equally against our available evidence. There is nothing to shew that Israel ever held Hamath, and v. 25 expressly says that it was 'the entering in' of Hamath, which Jeroboam restored. Further, the description given of Hamath in the words *which had belonged to Judah* are in any case unsuitable. Hamath had once paid a 'present' (2 Sam. viii. 9, 10) to David, but the kingdom of Israel was undivided then. Lastly, the translation *for Israel* is impossible; the phrase means *in or by Israel*.

In the face of these difficulties an emendation of the text commends itself as probable. A simple transposition and a dropping of a copula (*and*) gives the text: *how he warred with Damascus and restored Hamath to Judah by Israel*. Hamath may be a corrupt reading brought in from v. 25 in place of the name of *Elath* on the Red Sea. The expression *by Israel* for *by means of Israel* is unusual, and may also be due to a corruption of the text.

We thus obtain two accounts of the restoration of Elath to Judah; according to v. 22, Azariah of Judah restored it after the death of Jeroboam (see note on v. 22); according to v. 28, the restorer was Jeroboam himself. Probably the two accounts are complementary, not contra-

chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Jeroboam slept with 29 his fathers, even with the kings of Israel; and Zechariah his son reigned in his stead.

In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam king of 15 Israel began ¹Azariah son of Amaziah king of Judah to reign. Sixteen years old was he when he began to reign; 2 and he reigned two and fifty years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jecoliah of Jerusalem. And he did that 3 which was right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all

¹ In verses 13, 30, &c., *Uzziah*

dictory. The successes of Jeroboam forced the Syrians to relax their hold on Elath, but Azariah did not secure it for Judah by fortifying it, until after the death of the king of Israel.

CH. XV. 1—7 (= 2 Chr. xxvi. 3—23). THE REIGN OF AZARIAH (UZZIAH).

1. *In the twenty and seventh year of Jeroboam*] Amaziah (xiv. 17) died in the *fifteenth* (or by inclusive reckoning *sixteenth*) year of Jeroboam, and it was to be expected that Azariah would succeed his father in the same year. Instead of this, however, some eleven years remain unassigned to any king of Judah. Further, if we accept the statement that Azariah succeeded his father in the *twenty-seventh* year of Jeroboam, and combine it with the reckoning that Jeroboam reigned not more than forty-one years (xiv. 23), we cannot assign to Azariah from his *fifteenth* year until his *thirty-eighth* (v. 8 *infra*) any contemporary as king over Israel. Some twenty-four years are thus left unconnected with the name of any king in Israel. The gap indicated whether in the history of Israel or in that of Judah might be filled by supposing either a regency or a period of anarchy, but the extreme brevity of the narrative makes it unsafe to construct theories to explain the chronological difficulties.

Azariah] So named seven times in this chapter, in xiv. 21, and 1 Chr. iii. 12. He is called *Uzziah* four times in this chapter and also in Isa. i. 1; vi. 1; Hos. i. 1; Amos i. 1; Zech. xiv. 5; and throughout 2 Chr. xxvi. The two forms of the name closely resemble each other in Hebrew; they differ moreover but little in meaning: *Uzziah*, 'JAH is my strength'; *Azariah*, 'JAH hath given help.' A much damaged inscription of the Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser III. (745—727 B.C.) was once supposed (*Authority and Archaeology*, page 98) to refer to Azariah (Uzziah), but the identification is very uncertain.

3. *he did that which was right*] So also in Chron., though the Chronicler at a later point holds the king up as illustrating Divine punishment of presumption.

4 that his father Amaziah had done. Howbeit the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt
5 incense in the high places. And the LORD smote the king, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a
6 several house. And Jotham the king's son was over the household, judging the people of the land. Now the rest of the acts of Azariah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of
7 Judah? And Azariah slept with his fathers; and they buried him with his fathers in the city of David: and Jotham his son reigned in his stead.

8 In the thirty and eighth year of Azariah king of Judah did Zechariah the son of Jeroboam reign over Israel in
9 Samaria six months. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith
10 he made Israel to sin. And Shallum the son of Jabesh conspired against him, and smote him before the people,

¹ Or, *lazar house*

4. *Howbeit &c.*] Cp. xiv. 4.

5. *the LORD smote the king*] Cp. v. 37, 'The LORD began to send against Judah Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah.' The phrase, *the LORD smote*, does not necessarily imply that the writer knew of some particular sin, such as that described in 2 Chr. xxvi. 16 ff., for which this leprosy was a punishment.

a several house] i.e. separate, special. Cp. vii. 3, note; Lev. xiii. 45, 46; Num. v. 2; xii. 14, 15. The Heb. word for *several* is used in Ps. lxxxviii. 5, 'cast off (i.e. separate from the living) among the dead.'

was over the household] Cp. 1 K. iv. 6, note.

7. *in the city of David*] In Chron., *in the field of burial which belonged to the kings*, by which the Chronicler probably means a place outside the city.

8—12. THE REIGN OF ZECHARIAH OVER ISRAEL.

8. *In the thirty and eighth year*] If the date given in v. 1, and the length of reign assigned to Jeroboam in xiv. 23, be both correct, an interval of twenty-four years separated the death of Jeroboam from the accession of his son Zechariah. Cp. v. 1, note.

10. *before the people*] So Peshitta. The Heb. text here is corrupt, and cannot be translated. LXX. gives Κεβλαδμ, a simple transliteration of the Hebrew. Perhaps the right reading is 'in Ibleam' (ix. 27, note).

and slew him, and reigned in his stead. Now the rest of 11
the acts of Zechariah, behold, they are written in the book
of the chronicles of the kings of Israel. This was the 12
word of the LORD which he spake unto Jehu, saying, Thy
sons to the fourth generation shall sit upon the throne of
Israel. And so it came to pass.

Shallum the son of Jabesh began to reign in the nine 13
and thirtieth year of Uzziah king of Judah; and he reigned
the space of a month in Samaria. And Menahem the son 14
of Gadi went up from Tirzah, and came to Samaria, and
smote Shallum the son of Jabesh in Samaria, and slew
him, and reigned in his stead. Now the rest of the acts of 15
Shallum, and his conspiracy which he made, behold, they
are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of
Israel. Then Menahem smote Tiphshah, and all that were 16
therein, and the borders thereof, from Tirzah: because they
opened not to him, therefore he smote it; and all the women
therein that were with child he ripped up.

In the nine and thirtieth year of Azariah king of Judah 17
began Menahem the son of Gadi to reign over Israel, and
reigned ten years in Samaria. And he did that which was 18
evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not all his days
from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he
made Israel to sin. There came against the land Pul the 19

12. *the word of the LORD*] Cp. x. 30.

13. *Uzziah*] i.e. Azariah. Cp. v. 1, note.

14. *Tirzah*] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 17, note. LXX. however gives Tharsila, of which the *Onomasticon* says, 'Even now there is a village of the Samaritans in Bataŋaea called *Tharsila*.' *Batanaea*, which partly preserves the Heb. name *Bashan*, is the Greek name for the south-eastern portion of eastern Palestine. According to this Menahem came from beyond Jordan.

16. *Tiphshah*] This can hardly be the Tiphshah (= *Thapsacus*) of 1 K. iv. 24. LXX. gives *Thersa* here. A slight change in the Heb. consonants would give us *Tappuah*, a town on the border of Ephraim and Manasseh (Josh. xvii. 8).

ripped up] Cp. viii. 12, note.

17—22. THE REIGN OF MENAHEM OVER ISRAEL.

18. *all his days*] An emphatic touch added to a usual phrase. Cp. 1 K. xvi. 26, 'in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat.'

king of Assyria; and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand. And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land. Now the rest of the acts of Menahem, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel? And Menahem slept with his fathers; and Pekahiah his son reigned in his stead.

In the fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah Pekahiah the son of Menahem began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned two years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin. And Pekah the son of Remaliah, his captain, conspired

19. *Pul the king of Assyria*] Called *Tiglath-pileser* in v. 29; xvi. 7. The king meant is Tiglath-pileser III., who reigned 745—727 B.C. In the Babylonian list of kings preserved in the Inscriptions he appears as *Pulu*, but in the Babylonian Chronicle he is *Tukul-ti-abal-i-shar-ra*, and on his own inscriptions *Tuklat-abal-i-shar-ra*. The last becomes *Tiglath-pileser* in Hebrew. *Tilgath-pilneser* (1 Chr. v. 6; 2 Chr. xxviii. 20) is an erroneous form. In the Assyrian king's annals he records that he received among other tributes the 'present' of Menahem of the city of Samaria.

to confirm the kingdom in his hand] Menahem was a usurper, and probably there were rival claimants to the throne.

20. *exacted the money of Israel*] The construction of the Hebrew is crabbed; probably the compiler is greatly shortening the account before him.

fifty shekels of silver] i.e., according to some standards, a pound (*maneh*) of silver. Cp. 1 K. x. 17, note.

and stayed not] Had he stayed it would have been to appoint an Assyrian governor and to assign him troops to garrison Israel, but the Assyrian king was satisfied with Menahem's ready payment of tribute.

23—26. THE REIGN OF PEKAHIAH OVER ISRAEL.

25, *his captain*] Heb. *shālīsh*. Cp. vii. 2, note.

against him, and smote him in Samaria, in the ¹castle of the king's house, with Argob and Arich; and with him were fifty men of the Gileadites: and he slew him, and reigned in his stead. Now the rest of the acts of Pekahiah, and ²⁶ all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

In the two and fiftieth year of Azariah king of Judah ²⁷ Pekah the son of Remaliah began to reign over Israel in Samaria, and reigned twenty years. And he did that which ²⁸ was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, wherewith he made Israel to sin. In the days of Pekah king of Israel came ²⁹ Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maacah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and

¹ Or, *palace*

in Samaria...with Argob and Arich; and with him were fifty men of the Gileadites] The text of this passage is almost certainly corrupt. In the first place *Argob* and *Arich*, which according to the context should be names of persons, are not found elsewhere as such; *Argob* on the contrary is a place name, being the designation of a district east of Jordan. Cp. 1 K. iv. 13; Deut. iii. 4, 13. Secondly, it is to be noted that in the Vulgate Jerome gives the translation, *in turre domus regiae iuxta Argob*, thus placing the assassination east of Jordan. (Possibly he took *Argob* as the name of the chief city of the district of Argob.) This view is in conflict with the words *in Samaria*, but it is supported by the mention of the *Gileadites*. Moreover as Pekahiah's father, Menahem, came (apparently) from Eastern Palestine (v. 14), it is probable that the king had a residence in that part of the country. Further the words *in Samaria, and Arich*, have in Hebrew the appearance of being scribal blunders (instances of dittography). If we omit these words, we may reconstruct the passage somewhat as follows, *and smote him in the castle of the king's house near Argob and with him fifty men of the Gileadites.*

the castle of the king's house] Cp. 1 K. xvi. 18, note.

27—31. THE REIGN OF PEKAH OVER ISRAEL.

²⁹ *In the days of Pekah king of Israel*] We should expect simply *in his days*, but the use of the fuller form shews that the compiler is quoting from a fresh source.

Tiglath-pileser] Cp. v. 19, note.

Ijon, and Abel-beth-maacah] Cp. i K. xv. 20, notes.

Janoah] The only known *Janoah* was in the centre of Western Palestine, in the territory of Ephraim; Josh. xvi. 6. Probably some unknown city in the extreme north of the land is meant here.

Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali; and he carried
 30 them captive to Assyria. And Hoshea the son of Elah
 made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and
 smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, in the
 31 twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah. Now the rest

Kedesh] Mentioned as a city of Naphtali in Josh. xix. 37; Jud. iv. 6. It stands on a height west of Lake Huleh in the far north of Palestine.

Hazor] Cp. 1 K. ix. 15, note.

Gilead] Cp. 1 K. iv. 19.

Galilee] LXX. τὴν Γαλιλαίαν (Γαλιλαία), just as in the Gospels. It does not, however, appear that the district meant here was equal in extent to the province known in New Testament times as *Galilee*. In Hebrew it is called variously, 'The Gállil' (i.e. perhaps the *Circuit*), 'The land of the Gállil,' or 'The *Gállil* of the Nations.' The *Kedesh* mentioned in this verse is described in Josh. xx. 7 as *Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali*. Cp. 1 K. ix. 11, note. Plainly *Galilee* did not include all Naphtali.

carried them captive] The policy of Assyrian kings was to re-distribute the population of their empire. They had two objects in view. They wanted first to break the old ties of place and kindred in those who had newly become their subjects, and secondly to create a new tie of direct dependence upon the great king who ruled in Nineveh. That the old ties might be completely broken the captives were moved to very great distances, Israelites to the cities of the Medes (xvii. 6), Babylonians on the other hand to the land of Israel (xvii. 24). The transported populations were taught to feel that they had received their new holdings from the king of Assyria (xviii. 32), and a kind of feudal relationship was established of which later generations were even proud (Ezra iv. 2, 10). The mixture of peoples brought about by these measures was complete in the districts dealt with (xvii. 24; Ezra iv. 9). Sargon. (*K.I.B.* 11. 50) in describing the building of the great city which bore his name says that he settled within it 'men from the four quarters of the world,' and set Assyrians over them to keep them faithful. It must be added that large bodies of captives were also taken to serve as labourers for the execution of the vast building works undertaken by successive kings.

30. *Hoshea...made a conspiracy*] The conspiracy was doubtless made either on the expectation or on the assurance of the support of the king of Assyria. Tiglath-pileser himself in his Annals represents the substitution of Hoshea for Pekah as his own work: 'The land of the house of Omri¹...the whole of its inhabitants together with their goods I carried off to Assyria. Pekah their king I slew. Hoshea I appointed to rule over them.' (*K.I.B.* 11. 32.)

in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah] These words are corrupt. Jotham reigned sixteen years (v. 33); Hoshea began to

¹ Cp. 1 K. xvi. 27, note.

of the acts of Pekah, and all that he did, behold, they are written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

In the second year of Pekah the son of Remaliah king 32 of Israel began Jotham the son of Uzziah king of Judah to reign. Five and twenty years old was he when he began 33 to reign; and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jerusha the daughter of Zadok. And 34 he did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD: he did according to all that his father Uzziah had done. Howbeit the high places were not taken away: the people 35 still sacrificed and burned incense in the high places. He built the upper gate of the house of the LORD. Now the 36 rest of the acts of Jotham, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? In those days the LORD began to send against Judah 37 Rezin the king of Syria, and Pekah the son of Remaliah. And Jotham slept with his fathers, and was buried with his 38 fathers in the city of David his father: and Ahaz his son reigned in his stead.

In the seventeenth year of Pekah the son of Remaliah 16 Ahaz the son of Jotham king of Judah began to reign. Twenty years old was Ahaz when he began to reign; and 2

reign in the fourth or fifth year of Ahaz the son of Jotham. Cp. note on xvii. 1.

31. *the rest of the acts*] See also v. 37; xvi. 5.

32—38 (= 2 Chr. xxvii. 1—9). THE REIGN OF JOTHAM.

32. *In the second year of Pekah*] Cp. v. 27.

35. *Howbeit the high places &c.*] Cp. v. 4; xiv. 4.

the upper gate] In 2 Chr. xxiii. 20 'the upper gate' is mentioned as already existing in the time of Joash. Jotham's building may therefore have been a re-building.

37. *the LORD began to send*] Cp. v. 5 for this direct attribution of a calamity to the agency of the God of Israel. The word *began* implies that there was some threatening of Judah and perhaps a despatch of marauding bands (cp. xiii. 20), before the expedition against Jerusalem (xvi. 5) was undertaken.

CH. XVI. 1—4 (= 2 Chr. xxviii. 1—4). THE REIGN OF AHAZ.

Isaiah, who prophesied from the times of Azariah (Uzziah) to those of Hezekiah, complains bitterly of the prevalence of foreign influences

he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: and he did not that which was right in the eyes of the LORD his God, like David his father. But he walked in the way of the kings of Israel, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel. And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree. Then Rezin king of Syria and

among the Jews of his day. Foreign fashions, foreign superstitions, and foreign cults filled the land of Judah (Isa. ii. 6—9). The compiler of the book of Kings in his brief notices of the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham says nothing on this subject, but in his account of Ahaz given in this chapter he shews us Judah in the grip of the foreigner. The king practises the worship of Molech, and builds an altar after an Assyrian pattern. He is at war with Syria, and calls in Assyria to his help. These foreign entanglements proved ruinous to Judah religiously and politically. In the words of the Chronicler, 'they were the ruin of him, and of all Israel' (2 Chr. xxviii. 23).

3. *in the way of the kings of Israel*] He sacrificed in the high places (v. 4), like Jeroboam (1 K. xli. 31) and Jeroboam's successors (1 K. xv. 25, 26; *al.*). Of the four predecessors of Ahaz it is recorded only that they did not remove the high places, and that the *people* used them. Ahaz therefore is blamed for taking part in person in high-place worship. Of his grandson and imitator, Manasseh, it is recorded that he 'made an Asherah, as did Ahab king of Israel' (xxi. 3). It is probable therefore that the grandfather did the same, and in this matter also 'walked in the way of the kings of Israel.'

made his son to pass through the fire] This is the usual phrase. See xvii. 17; xxi. 6; xxiii. 10. Another phrase is *make to pass through to Molech*. See Lev. xviii. 21; Jer. xxxii. 35. In Chron. *he burnt... in the fire*. Cp. 1 K. xi. 5, note on *Milcom*. Two human sacrifices by fire are recorded in the Old Testament, in Jud. xi. 39 (cp. v. 31, Jephthah); and in 2 K. iii. 27 (the king of Moab). Such practices are forbidden in the Law (Lev. xviii. 21; Deut. xviii. 10); and condemned by the Prophets (Jer. xxxii. 35; Mic. vi. 7). Gen. xxii. 1—18 may be said to suggest the substitution of spiritual for material sacrifices, as far as human victims are concerned.

4. *in the high places*] Cp. 1 K. xi. 7, note.
on the hills] Cp. xvii. 10; also Ezek. xviii. 6, 11, 15 where 'to eat upon the mountains' means to take part in the sacrifices offered on the high places.

under every green tree] The Heb. word used here for *green* means rather *flourishing*. Large trees are rare in Palestine and so form important land marks. Cp. Jud. iv. 5; 1 Sam. xxii. 6; xxxi. 13. In different ways such trees acquired a sacred or semi-sacred character, in some cases because they were associated with appearances of JEHOVAH or

Pekah son of Remaliah king of Israel came up to Jerusalem to war: and they besieged Ahaz, but could not overcome him. At that time Rezin king of Syria recovered Elath to 6 Syria, and drave the Jews from ¹Elath: and the ²Syrians came to Elath, and dwelt there, unto this day. So Ahaz 7

¹ Heb. *Eloth*

² According to another reading, *Edomites*

of the Angel of JEHOVAH (Gen. xviii. 1; Jud. vi. 11), in others perhaps because the flourishing condition of the tree was ascribed to the beneficence of some deity who inhabited the spot. For a nobler form of this last thought cp. Ps. civ. 16.

5—9 (cp. 2 Chr. xxviii. 5—21; Isa. vii. 1—9). THE SYRO-EPHRAIMITE WAR.

From Isa. vii. 5, 6 we learn that the object of this attack was to depose Ahaz and to make a certain Ben Tabeel ('Son of Tabeel') king in his place. The ultimate object no doubt was to force Judah into an alliance with Syria and Israel against the advancing power of Assyria. In the year 740 B.C., shortly before Ahaz came to the throne, Tiglath-pileser captured after a three years' siege the important fortress of Arpad in Northern Syria, and made the state of which it was the capital an Assyrian province. It became clear that the Assyrian king would not long remain content with a formal submission such as Menahem had given him (xv. 19, 20), but would seek to incorporate Syria in his empire. In the presence of this danger the old enemies, Israel and Syria, united and strove to force Judah to join the alliance against Assyria.

5. *Rezin*] This form is given also in Isa. vii. 1, 8, but LXX. in 2 K. xvi. 5, 6, 9 gives *Ραζισών*, i.e. *Rezon*, as in 1 K. xi. 23. With this latter form agrees *Raṣunnu*, the name given to this king in the Annals of Tiglath-pileser.

Pekah] See xv. 27—31.

could not overcome him] Probably the allies did not proceed to extremities, for they had sympathizers in Jerusalem (Isa. viii. 6), and had reason to hope that the city would be delivered to them through fear or treachery.

6. *Elath*] Cp. 1 K. ix. 26, note.

to Syria...and the Syrians] This is the reading of the Hebrew text (*Kēthib*) and of the Peshitta. The form, however, of the Heb. word for *Syrians* given here is not the usual *Arammī*, but *Arummī*, with the obscure *ā* pronounced as *ā*. *Arummī* ('Syrian') written with the sign for this *ā* resembles closely *Adōmī* ('Edomite'), and in the Hebrew margin (the *Kēri*) and also in LXX. Vulg. Targ. the reading *Edomites* is actually found. Accordingly some scholars strike out *Rezin* as a gloss, and read *Edom* for *Aram* ('Syria') twice in the verse: *The king of Edom recovered Elath to Edom,...and the Edomites came to Elath.*

sent messengers to Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, saying, I am thy servant and thy son: come up, and save me out of the hand of the king of Syria, and out of the hand of the king of Israel, which rise up against me. And Ahaz took the silver and gold that was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house, and sent it for a present to the king of Assyria. And the king of Assyria hearkened unto him: and the king of Assyria went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried *the people of* it captive to Kir, and slew Rezin. And king Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and saw the altar that was at Damascus: and king Ahaz sent to Urijah the priest the fashion of the altar, and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof. And Urijah

7. *Tiglath-pileser*] Cp. xv. 19, note. Asa, a predecessor of Ahaz, had set the example of calling in foreign aid (1 K. xv. 18).

thy son] Cp. viii. 9, note.

8. *a present*] Both in Hebrew and in Assyrian *tribute* is called a 'gift,' but the Assyrians regarded a king as rebellious, if he did not send his 'gift' regularly. Cp. xvii. 4.

9. *and took it*] Tiglath-pileser according to the Assyrian records marched southward through Palestine in 734 B.C. and reached Gaza. Probably on his way he inflicted some decisive check on Rezin, but Damascus held out until 732 B.C. when it fell, after its territory had been ravaged in two campaigns. The Assyrian records are, however, much injured, and the fate of Rezin is not recorded on the fragments which remain. (*K. A. T.* ed. 3, pages 55—57.) For Tiglath-pileser's dealings with Israel see xv. 29, 30, with the notes.

to Kir] Cp. Amos i. 5, where this event is foretold. LXX. (B) omits the words, but LXX. (A) has *Κυρήνηδε*, 'to Cyrene,' so also Vulg., but the identification cannot be correct, for Cyrene (in North Africa) never, so far as we know, fell into the hands of the Assyrians. Modern Assyriologists identify *Kir* (read as *Kör*) with the land of *Kares* mentioned by Arrian (iii. 8. 5) as adjoining *Sittacène*. Both these districts lay east of the Tigris and bordered on Elam.

10—18 (cp. 2 Chron. xxviii. 22—25). THE RELIGIOUS MEASURES OF AHAZ.

10. *went...to meet*] i.e. went to pay homage to. The same phrase is used of Josiah in xxiii. 29.

the altar] Assyrian kings carried portable altars with them on their campaigns.

Urijah the priest] Isa. viii. 2 (called 'Uriah'). For the title *the priest* cp. xl. 9, note.

the priest built an altar: according to all that king Ahaz had sent from Damascus, so did Urijah the priest make it against king Ahaz came from Damascus. And when the king was come from Damascus, the king saw the altar: and the king drew near unto the altar, and offered thereon. And he burnt his burnt offering and his meal offering, and poured his drink offering, and sprinkled the blood of his peace offerings, upon the altar. And the brasen altar, which was before the LORD, he brought from the forefront of the house, from between his altar and the house of the LORD; and put it on the north side of his altar. And king Ahaz commanded Urijah the priest, saying, Upon the great altar burn the morning burnt offering, and the evening meal offering, and the king's burnt offering, and his meal offering, with the burnt offering of all the people of the land, and their meal offering, and their drink offerings; and sprinkle upon it all the blood of the burnt offering, and all the blood

¹ Or, *went up unto it*

² Heb. *the peace offerings which were his*

11. *against king Ahas came*] For this English construction cp. Gen. xliii. 25, 'against Joseph came at noon'; Exod. vii. 15 (A.V.), 'against he come.'

12. *offered thereon*] Or (as marg. and LXX.), *went up unto it*.

13. *And he burnt*] From this and the preceding verse it is clear that the king himself acted the priest's part. Though no blame is expressed, it is clear that the writer of Kings regarded the action of Ahaz as unusual, but it does not appear that he looked upon it with the horror with which Uzziah's usurpation of the priestly office filled the Chronicler (2 Chr. xxvi. 16 ff.)

meal offering] Cp. 1 K. viii. 64, note.

drink offering] With each lamb offered as a burnt offering a quarter of a hin of wine was to be offered as a drink offering (Exod. xxix. 40; Lev. xxiii. 13). Drink offerings were in use among the Assyrians as well as among the Greeks and Romans.

peace offerings] Cp. 1 K. iii. 15; viii. 63.

14. *the brasen altar, which was before the LORD*] Cp. 1 K. viii. 64.

15. *Upon the great altar*] The new altar was doubtless larger than the old brasen altar, which indeed was found to be too small to receive all the sacrifices of Solomon's Dedication Feast.

the morning burnt offering, and the evening meal offering] Cp. Ezek. xlvi. 13—15. According to Exod. xxix. 38—41 a lamb was to be offered both morning and evening. This was called the '*ôloth sâmid*' 'continual burnt offering' (Dan. xii. 11).

of the sacrifice: but the brasen altar shall be for me to
 16 inquire by. Thus did Urijah the priest, according to all
 17 that king Ahaz commanded. And king Ahaz cut off the
 1 borders of the bases, and removed the laver from off them;
 and took down the sea from off the brasen oxen that were
 18 under it, and put it upon a pavement of stone. And the
 2 covered way for the sabbath that they had built in the
 house, and the king's entry without, turned he 3 unto
 the house of the LORD, because of the king of Assyria.
 19 Now the rest of the acts of Ahaz which he did, are they
 not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of
 20 Judah? And Ahaz slept with his fathers, and was buried
 with his fathers in the city of David: and Hezekiah his son
 reigned in his stead.

¹ Or, *panels*

² Or, *covered place*

³ Or, *round*

for me to inquire by] The meaning of this phrase is doubtful. Enquiry was made of JEHOVAH by means of a priest wearing the Urim and Thummim on his ephod (1 Sam. xxiii. 6—12; Ezra ii. 62, 63), but not (so far as we know) by means of an altar. The phrase may perhaps mean *for me to consider* what shall be done with it.

16. *Thus did Urijah*] The kings from David and Solomon downwards asserted their right of control over matters connected with worship. Cp. xii. 4 ff.; xviii. 4; xxii. 3.

17. *borders*] Cp. 1 K. vii. 28, note.

the laver] There were ten lavers according to 1 K. vii. 38.

18. *turned he unto*] According to marg. he made this entry encompass the Temple.

because of the king of Assyria] Cp. v. 10.

19, 20. AHAZ SUCCEEDED BY HEZEKIAH.

20. *Hezekiah*] This is a hybrid form of the name, being compounded of the *Efēklas* of the LXX. (*Ezechias* in the Vulgate) and the Hebrew *Hizkijah* (xviii. 1, 14) or *Hiskijahu* (here and in xviii. 19). The meaning of the name is 'Jah (Jahu) is my strength.' See xviii. 1—8.

CH. XVII. 1—6 (ep. xviii. 9—11). THE REIGN OF HOSHEA AND THE FATE OF SAMARIA.

The course of events is not easily to be gathered from this passage. Hoshea had been appointed king by Tiglath-pileser (xv. 30, note), on the usual condition of paying tribute to Assyria. After Tiglath-pileser's death he no doubt ceased to pay, for Shalmaneser 'came

In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began Hoshea 17
the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel, and reigned
nine years. And he did that which was evil in the sight 2
of the LORD, yet not as the kings of Israel that were before
him. Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; 3
and Hoshea became his servant, and brought him presents.
And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea; for 4
he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and offered

up against him' and exacted 'presents' (v. 3). After a few years Hoshea again withheld his tribute, and so the king of Assyria 'shut him up and bound him in prison.' Then followed the siege of Samaria. But vv. 5, 6 seem to come from a source different from that of vv. 3, 4, and the order of events may have been inverted. It has been suggested that the latter verses come from the Israelite Annals, while vv. 5, 6 (cp. xviii. 9-11) come from the Annals of the Southern Kingdom.

1. *In the twelfth year of Ahaz... began Hoshea... to reign*] This date can hardly be right. Ahaz came to the throne in the seventeenth year of Pekah (xvi. 1), and Pekah reigned twenty years (xv. 27), so that the throne of Israel became vacant in the *fourth* year of Ahaz. But Hoshea succeeded Pekah (xv. 30, in agreement with the Assyrian Annals), and there is no trace of an interregnum, so that we should read *fourth* year for *twelfth*. This reckoning brings the fall of Samaria and consequently the whole of the reign of Hoshea within the period occupied by the reign of Ahaz in Judah. The reading *twelfth* together with the chronological statements of xviii. 9, 10, which represent the reigns of Hoshea and Hezekiah as partly contemporaneous, must be given up. Cp. note on xviii. 13, in *the fourteenth year of Hezekiah*.

began Hoshea... to reign] For the circumstances see xv. 30, with note.
2. *that which was evil*] A reference probably to his breach of faith with Assyria. Compare what is said of Zedekiah in Ezek. xvii. 11-16.

3. *Shalmaneser*] In Assyrian, *Shulman-asharid*. He was the fourth king who bore this name. He succeeded Tiglath-pileser III., 'Pul' (cp. xv. 19, note) in 727 B.C., and reigned till 722 B.C., when he was succeeded by Sargon (Isa. xx. 1), the father of Sennacherib. No inscriptions of his have been preserved. It is very improbable that *Shalman* in Hos. x. 14 means Shalmaneser IV.

presents] Cp. xvi. 8, note.

4. *So king of Egypt* (Mizraim)] The name *So*, read with different vowels, may be pronounced *Seve* or *Seva*, a pronunciation which would bring it into close correspondence with the *Sib'e* of the Assyrian Annals. This *Sib'e* is mentioned by Sargon as the *turton*, 'commander-in-chief,' of *Mucri* who in 720 B.C. came to the help of Hanun of Gaza in his revolt against Assyria. After the defeat of Hanun and *Sib'e* the *Pir'u* (Pharaoh) of *Mucri* paid tribute. There is no reasonable doubt that the word *Mucri* of the Annals and *Mizraim* of the book of Kings both mean *Egypt* in its usual sense. Who then

no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound
 5 him in prison. Then the king of Assyria came up through-
 out all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it
 6 three years. In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of
 Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away unto Assyria,
 and placed them in Halah, and in Habor, *on* the river of
 7 Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. And it was so,

was the person called *Seve* king of Egypt in the Bible and *Sib's commander-in-chief of Egypt* in Sargon's inscription? It is not improbable that it was *Shabaka*, who was king of Egypt (circ. 715-705 B.C.), and was acting as regent, and is entitled king of Egypt as early as 725 B.C., acting for either Pankhy I. or Kashtia (Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt*, III. 282). If the termination *-ka* represents, as has been suggested, the article, a shortening of the name in popular use to such a form as *Seve* or *Sib's* is only to be expected. The *Pir'u* of Sargon's inscription would be the Pharaoh, Pankhy I. or Kashtia.

shut him up] Shalmaneser caught and imprisoned Hoshea first, and then (v. 5) proceeded to lay siege to Samaria.

5. *Then the king*] Better, *And the king*.

three years] Samaria was a strong city. Cp. 1 K. xvi. 24, note.

6. *the king of Assyria took Samaria*] This happened in the year 722 B.C., the year in which Shalmaneser was succeeded by Sargon. In the Assyrian Annals Sargon claims the achievement for himself, 'The city of Samirina I besieged, I captured; 27,290 men dwelling within it I took as spoil; fifty chariots I took in the midst thereof.'

carried Israel away] Thus completing the work begun by Tiglath-pileser. Cp. xv. 29; with note.

in Halah &c.] 'The countries in which the captive Ephraimites were placed as settlers, were Mesopotamia and Media. The *Habur* (Chaboras) is the river which waters the Assyrian province of Guzanu (Gozan), and Halah is mentioned as a district which cannot have been far distant from Harran (Haran).' Winckler, *K.A.T.* ed. 3, p. 269.

7-23 (cp. xviii. 12). THE INDICTMENT OF ISRAEL.

This passage has probably received some additions (e.g. the references to Judah) to its original form, so that its unity is obscured; it may however be analysed as follows:

(1) The cause of the overthrow was that Israel practised the sins of the nations dispossessed by Israel (vv. 7-12).

(2) Israel (and Judah) rejected the warning given for these sins by the prophets (vv. 13; 14).

(3) Israel practised the sins of the neighbouring nations in spite of timely warning, i.e. made Asherah, worshipped the host of heaven,

because the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, which brought them up out of the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods, and walked in the statutes of the nations, 8 whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they ¹made. And the 9 children of Israel did secretly things that were not right against the LORD their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city. And they set them up ²pillars and Asherim upon 10 every high hill, and under every green tree: and there they 11 burnt incense in all the high places, as did the nations whom the LORD carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger: and they 12

¹ Or, practised

² Or, obelisks

served Baal, made their children pass through the fire, and used enchantments (*vv.* 15—17).

(4) So God cast Israel (and Judah) out of His sight for their continuance in the sin of Jeroboam, and they were carried away to Assyria (*vv.* 18—23).

The passage as a whole is marked by a use of Deuteronomic phraseology; it comes no doubt from the hand of the editor of Kings. The mention of Judah shews that the passage as we have it is later than the captivity of Judah.

8. *statutes*] Heb. *hukkōth*, 'established customs,' especially religious customs.

and [in the statutes] of the kings of Israel, which they made] The 'statutes' here referred to are those connected with the calf-worship; but the construction is awkward, and the text may be corrupt. The phrase occurs in a different form in *v.* 19, 'in the statutes of Israel which they made.'

9. *did secretly things that were not right*] The rendering, 'did secretly' is not certain. If however the rendering is right, the reference is probably to such practices as are referred to in *Isa.* viii. 19 or *Ezek.* viii. 7—12, i.e. to necromancy or to occult ('in the dark') worship.

from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city] The 'towers' referred to are those which were erected in the open country for the protection of flocks from bands of marauders. Cp. 2 Chr. xxvi. 10; xxvii. 4. The meaning of the phrase is that every kind of 'city,' small or great, had its high place.

10. *pillars and Asherim*] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 23, note.

upon every high hill, and under every green tree] Cp. xvi. 4, notes.

11. *wrought wicked things*] This translation correctly reproduces the present Heb. text, but this text appears to be a euphemistic gloss of an older reading. Cp. *v.* 9, 'things that were not right.'

served idols, whereof the LORD had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing. Yet the LORD testified unto Israel, and unto Judah, by the hand of every prophet, and of every seer, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by the hand of my servants the prophets. Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their neck, like to the neck of their fathers, who believed not in the LORD their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified unto them; and they followed vanity, and became vain, and went after the nations that were round about them, concerning whom the LORD had charged them that they should not do like them. And they forsook all the commandments of the LORD their God, and made them molten images, even two calves, and made an Asherah, and

12. *idols*] Heb. *gillūlīm*. Cp. 1 K. xv. 12, note.

13. *testified unto Israel*] i.e. warned Israel. The same Heb. expression is used 1 K. ii. 42, '[I] protested unto thee.'

all the law] Or, *all the torah*. *Torah* usually translated 'law' means properly 'teaching, guidance'; it describes equally well the prophet's message or the directions of the Law.

14. *hardened their neck*] Lit. *made their neck stiff*. A *stiff neck* is a figure of obstinacy and self-will. Cp. Job xv. 26; Ps. lxxv. 5.

believed not in the LORD] This expression, so common in the New Testament, is rare enough in the Old Testament to be remarkable. Cp. Gen. xv. 6; Exod. xiv. 31; Deut. i. 32; Ps. lxxviii. 22. Even in some of these passages the belief spoken of is something less than the whole-hearted confidence in a Person, which is Faith in the Christian sense.

15. *his covenant*] Cp. 1 K. xix. 10.

vanity] LXX. τῶν ματαλῶν, 'vanities,' i.e. idols. Cp. 1 K. xvi. 13, note.

and became vain] The same play upon *vanity* and *vain* is found in Jer. ii. 5. Cp. Ps. cxv. 8, 'They that make them (i.e. images) shall be like unto them'; and Rom. i. 21, ἐματαιώθησαν ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς αὐτῶν, 'they (i.e. the worshippers of images) became vain in their reasonings.' Israel became 'vain,' i.e. empty of reason, because they worshipped irrational things.

16. *and made them molten images, even two calves*] This was the native idolatry of Israel, and it does not agree well with the mention of the foreign deities, Asherah, the host of heaven, and Baal, which follow. The calf-worship was a worship of JEHOVAH, though of a

worshipped all the host of heaven, and served Baal. And 17 they caused their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire, and used divination and enchantments, and sold themselves to do that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. Therefore the LORD 18 was very angry with Israel, and removed them out of his sight: there was none left but the tribe of Judah only. Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their 19 God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they ¹made. And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted 20

¹ Or, *practised*

degraded kind (1 K. xii. 28). The words, *even two calves*, may be a later addition to the text.

an Asherah] Rather, *Asherah* (without the article, i.e. the goddess). Cp. *vv.* 30, 31; 1 K. xviii. 19.

the host of heaven] Cp. xxi. 3; xxiii. 5; Deut. iv. 19. In this we may see Babylonian influence, for in Babylonia, it has been said, stars were gods, and gods were stars. Stars when above the horizon were *Igigi*, 'gods of heaven,' when below they were *Anunnaki*, 'gods of earth' (i.e. of the underworld). Worship was paid specially to the seven planets and (it seems) to the twelve signs of the Zodiac. The twelve signs are found inscribed upon stones, supposed to be 'boundary stones,' which are earlier than 1000 B.C. Cp. *K.A.T.* ed. 3, pages 451 ff., 626 ff.

Baal] Cp. 1 K. xviii. 18, note on *Baalim*.

17. *divination*] Heb. *ḥsāmīm* (pl. of *ḥesem*). The corresponding Arabic root is used of divining by drawing headless arrows at a sanctuary.

[and used] *enchantments*] The same Heb. word, *niḥēsh*, is used in 1 K. xx. 33, 'took it (i.e. a certain expression used by the king of Israel) as an omen.' LXX. *olwlforro*, which means to 'take omens from the flight or screams of birds,' but there is nothing to shew that this special kind of divination is meant here.

18. *out of his sight*] Rather, *from his presence*. - Cp. 1 K. ix. 7.

the tribe of Judah only] Cp. 1 K. xi. 13, note; xii. 21, note.

19. *in the statutes of Israel*] Cp. viii. 18; Mic. i. 13.

20. *And the LORD rejected (refused) all the seed of Israel*] Three stages in the LORD's dealings with Israel (i.e. the northern kingdom) are indicated in this verse: (1) He *refused* them, i.e. He preferred Judah; cp. Ps. lxxviii. 67, 68; (2) He *delivered* them to spoilers, i.e. to the Syrians and their allies during the prolonged wars with Syria from Baasha to Jeroboam II.; (3) He *cast them out* of His presence by sending them into Assyrian Captivity from which as a people they never returned.

them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until
 21 he had cast them out of his sight. For he rent Israel from
 the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of
 Nebat king: and Jeroboam ¹drave Israel from following the
 22 LORD, and made them sin a great sin. And the children
 of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did;
 23 they departed not from them; until the LORD removed
 Israel out of his sight, as he spake by the hand of all his
 servants the prophets. So Israel was carried away out of
 their own land to Assyria, unto this day.

24—And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon,

¹ According to another reading, *drew Israel away*

21. *rent*] Cp. 1 K. xi. 30, 31.

drave] The reading of the Hebrew is uncertain; the text (*Kāthib*) has *yadda*, 'drew away'; the margin (*Kēri*) has *yaddah*, 'drave, banished.' Cp. 1 K. xii. 28—33.

from following the LORD] This was the ultimate result, but Jeroboam's intention was simply to keep his people from resorting to Solomon's temple.

23. *to Assyria*] Cp. the more definite statement of v. 6.

24—41. THE ORIGIN OF THE CORRUPT WORSHIP OF THE SAMARITANS.

This passage falls naturally into three divisions:

(1) 24—28. The foreign settlers are instructed how to 'fear the LORD' by an Israelite priest sent to them by the Assyrians.

(2) 29—34 a. The foreign settlers continue to serve their own gods; hence arises a fusion of worships.

(3) 34 b—41. This mixed worship is not according to the covenant of the Law.

This passage appears to have been written long after the capture of Samaria by the Assyrians. Cp. v. 29 (use of the name 'Samaritans'); v. 34 ('the former manners'... 'unto this day'); v. 41 ('children and children's children unto this day'). Probably the passage was written after the Jews on returning from Captivity in Babylon came into unfriendly relations with the 'Samaritans.'

24—28. THE FOREIGN SETTLERS INSTRUCTED HOW TO FEAR THE LORD.

24. *the king of Assyria*] More than one Assyrian king seems to have settled colonists in the land of Israel. Sargon (v. 6, note) says in one of his inscriptions that he placed the remnant of four peoples whom he conquered in *Blit Humri*, 'the place of Omri,' i.e. the land of Israel (*Authority and Archaeology*, pp. 101—2). In Ezra iv. 2, 10 some of the foreign inhabitants claimed to have been brought to

and from Cuthah, and from Avva, and from Hāmath and Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof. And so it was, at the 25 beginning of their dwelling there, that they feared not the LORD: therefore the LORD sent lions among them, which killed some of them. Wherefore they spake to the king of 26 Assyria, saying, The nations which thou hast carried away, and placed in the cities of Samaria, know not the manner of the God of the land: therefore he hath sent lions among them, and, behold, they slay them, because they know not the manner of the God of the land. Then the king of 27 Assyria commanded, saying, Carry thither one of the priests whom ye brought from thence; and let them go and dwell there, and let him teach them the manner of the God of the land. So one of the priests whom they had carried 28 away from Samaria came and dwelt in Beth-el, and taught

Palestine by Esar-haddon (xix. 37), while others owed their transplantation to Osnappar, i.e. Asshur-bani-pal, the son and successor of Esar-haddon.

Babylon] Ezra iv. 9.

Cuthah] Called *Cuth* in v. 30, and *Kutu* in the inscriptions, situated on the Euphrates north of Babylon. *Sepharvaim* (if it be the *Sippar* of the inscriptions) lay still further north on a canal of the Euphrates, but within the limits of Babylonia.

Avva] Possibly the same place as *Ivvah* (xviii. 34, note), but nothing is at present known about it.

Hamath] See 1 K. viii. 65, note.

possessed] In modern English, *took possession of*. Cp. Josh. xviii. 3, 'How long are ye slack to go in to possess the land?'

25. *the LORD sent lions]* The immediate cause of this incursion of wild beasts was no doubt the depopulation of the country. Cp. Exod. xxiii. 29. So Isaiah foretells that Judah will become jungle, and that means of defence against wild beasts will become necessary in districts once cultivated (Isa. vii. 23—25; cp. Jer. v. 6).

26. *to the king of Assyria]* Which king is meant, we can only guess. Sargon and his three successors, Sennacherib, Esar-haddon, and Asshur-bani-pal, all had to give a good deal of attention to the countries adjacent to the Mediterranean.

27. *one of the priests...and let them go]* Probably we should omit *one*, and read simply *of the priests*, and (later in the verse) *let them teach*.

28. *Beth-el]* The seat of the calf-worship as long as the kingdom of Israel remained (1 K. xli. 29; Hosea x. 5 (*Beth-aven* = *Beth-el*); Amos vii. 13).

29 them how they should fear the LORD. Howbeit every nation made gods of their own, and put them in the houses of the high places which the Samaritans had made, every nation in their cities wherein they dwelt. And the men of Babylon made Succoth-benoth, and the men of Cuth made Nergal, and the men of Hamath made Ashima, and the Avvites made Nibhaz and Tartak, and the Sepharvites burnt their children in the fire to Adrammelech and Anammelech,

29—31a. THE FOREIGN SETTLERS CONTINUE TO SERVE THEIR OWN GODS.

29. *Howbeit every nation*] And every nation.

the Samaritans] The earliest mention by name of the mixed nation which took the place of 'Israel' (v. 23). The next mention of the 'Samaritans' in the Bible is in the New Testament. No doubt a considerable number of Israelites remained in the land and formed an important part of the new population.

30. *Succoth-benoth*] This name offers some difficulties. Two explanations are given. Some take *succoth* as a pure Heb. word meaning 'booths' and to be explained as a corruption of *banitu*, an epithet of *Ishtar* in her character as Venus; *succoth-Benoth* would then mean the booths erected for impure rites outside the temple. (2) On the other hand, *Succoth* may be a corrupt form of *Siccuth*, Amos v. 26) the name of a planet-god (Mars or Saturn) worshipped by the Babylonians; in this case the second element (*benoth*) is probably to be struck out of the text as an instance of dittography.

Cuth] i.e. Cuthah (v. 24).

Nergal] The Sun-god in his harmful aspect, as the god of scorching heat, of fever, and of pestilence. He has been compared with Molech. Cp. 1 K. xi. 5, note on *Milcom*.

Ashima] LXX. ἀσμάθ. No deity bearing such a name is known. It may be, however, that we have here one of the depreciatory terms (like *Bosheth* for *Baal*; cp. 1 K. xi. 5, notes), which are sometimes substituted in the Old Testament for the names of false gods. In Amos viii. 14 the god (probably the golden calf) of the northern kingdom is called 'the sin (Heb. *ashmath*) of Samaria.'

31. *the Avvites*] The inhabitants of Avva (v. 24).

Nibhaz] The reading of this name is uncertain. *Nibhaz* cannot be identified with any known name of a deity.

Tartak] No light has hitherto been thrown on this name.

Adrammelech] This is a compound name signifying 'Adar the king.' But since no Babylonian deity named 'Adar' is known, Assyriologists propose to read *Adad* (*Hadad*) in place of it. *Hadad*, called also *Rimmon* (*Ramman*), was primarily the storm-god of the Babylonians. In the Chaldean account of the Flood he is described as *bēl abūbi*, 'lord of the Flood.'

the ¹gods of Sepharvaim. So they feared the LORD, and ³² made unto them from among themselves priests of the high places, which sacrificed for them in the houses of the high places. They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, ³³ after the manner of the nations from among whom they had been carried away. Unto this day they do after the former ³⁴ manners: they fear not the LORD, neither do they after their statutes, or after their ordinances, or after the law or after the commandment which the LORD commanded the children of Jacob, whom he named Israel; with whom ³⁵ the LORD had made a covenant, and charged them, saying, Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them: but the LORD, who ³⁶ brought you up out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a stretched out arm, him shall ye fear, and unto him shall ye bow yourselves, and to him shall ye sacrifice: and the statutes and the ordinances, and the law and the ³⁷ commandment, which he wrote for you, ye shall observe to

¹ Or, god

Anammelech] *Anu* was the Babylonian god of Heaven, 'the father or king in the family of the gods.'

Sepharvaim] Cp. v. 24, note.

³². *from among themselves priests*] Cp. 1 K. xii. 31, 'priests from among all the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.' The anxiety of the Jews for the purity in descent of their own priests is illustrated by Ezra ii. 61—63. The worship at high places has been condemned explicitly or implicitly throughout this book beginning from 1 K. iii. 2, 3.

34 b—41. THIS WORSHIP NOT ACCORDING TO THE COVENANT OF THE LAW.

³⁴. *they fear not the LORD*] The contradiction between this statement and that of v. 33 is purely verbal. The Samaritans 'feared the LORD' in an external sense, for part of their worship was offered to Him; in a deeper sense they 'did not fear the LORD,' for they broke regularly one of His chief commandments, namely, to acknowledge no other God.

after their statutes, or after their ordinances] Read, *after his* (i. e. JEHOVAH'S) *statutes, or after his ordinances*. Only a slight correction of the Hebrew is needed to obtain this reading.

Jacob, whom he named Israel] Cp. Gen. xxxii. 28; xxxv. 10.

³⁵. *Ye shall not fear other gods, &c.*] Cp. Deut. vi. 13—15.

³⁷. *which he wrote for you*] Cp. Deut. v. 22.

38 do for evermore; and ye shall not fear other gods: and the covenant that I have made with you ye shall not forget;
 39 neither shall ye fear other gods: but the LORD your God shall ye fear; and he shall deliver you out of the hand of
 40 all your enemies. Howbeit they did not hearken, but they
 41 did after their former manner. So these nations feared the LORD, and served their graven images; their children likewise, and their children's children, as did their fathers, so do they unto this day.

18 Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz king of Judah began to reign. Twenty and five years old was he when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty and nine years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Abi the daughter of Zechariah. And he did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, according to all that David his father

38. *ye shall not forget*] Cp. Deut. iv. 23.

40. *but they did*] Rather, but they do.

41. *unto this day*] The form of expression used in this verse suggests that it was written some time after the return from Captivity, when the impossibility of making any religious union with the Samaritans was fully realised.

CH. XVIII. 1—8 (cp. 2 Chr. xxix. 1, 3). THE REIGN OF HEZEKIAH.

This summary is longer than usual, so that the king's rebellion against Assyria and his war against the Philistines both find mention. It has been suggested that *v. 4 a* (i.e. as far as 'Asherah') is an interpolation, on the ground that Josiah's removal of the high places is narrated in ch. xxiii. as though it were altogether a new measure. The proof, however, is insufficient, and on the other side it may be said that a removal of high places is ascribed to Hezekiah in an independent passage, i.e. in *v. 22*.

1. *in the third year of Hoshea*] This date is probably not correct. See xvii. 1, note.

2. *Abi*] In Chron., *Abijah*.

3. *David his father*] This praise is given in Kings to none of Hezekiah's predecessors except Asa. Hezekiah (*v. 4*) made, like Asa (1 K. xv. 12, 13), a vigorous attempt to put down idolatrous practices.

had done. He removed the high places, and brake the 4 pillars, and cut down the Asherah: and he brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it; and ¹he called it ²Nehushtan. He trusted in the LORD, the God 5 of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor *among them* that were before him. For he clave to the LORD, he departed not from following 6 him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses. And the LORD was with him; whither- 7 soever he went forth he prospered: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not. He smote the 8

¹ Or, *it was called*

² That is, *A piece of brass*

4. *He removed the high places*] Not the high places themselves, for they were only level spaces, but all the furniture belonging to them, altar, Asherah, monoliths, &c. Cp. v. 22.

pillars] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 23.

the brasen serpent] Num. xxi. 8, 9. The statement that Moses made this serpent which Hezekiah destroyed may simply represent the excuse offered by those Israelites who burnt incense to it. Some of the Assyrian reliefs shew persons worshipping a serpent set upon a standard. (A. Jeremias, *Das A. T. im Lichte des alten Orients*, page 322, figure 111.) The local deity of Dêr (Dur-ilu) in northern Babylonia is called a 'serpent-deity,' whose title was the 'Lord of Life.' The serpent of Aesculapius, the physician-god, has a similar significance.

he called it] If Hezekiah gave the name, it signified a *piece of brass* (marg.). But the margin, *it was called*, implies that *Nehushtan* was the popular name; if so, it meant, probably, 'the serpent-god.' Cp. v. 22, which supplements our knowledge of the religious policy of Hezekiah.

5. *so that after him was none*] The writer forgets for the moment Josiah, of whom he says almost the same thing. Cp. xxiii. 25.

6. *he clave to the LORD*] A favourite expression in Deuteronomy (x. 20; xi. 22; xiii. 4 [5]; xxx. 20). The expression implies an anthropomorphism (Ruth i. 14); LXX. gives here, 'he hoped in the LORD.'

7. *he rebelled*] As Ahaz his father paid tribute and made formal submission (xvi. 7, 8), this word is suitable here. Hezekiah was able no doubt to withhold tribute for several years before his fourteenth year (= 701 B.C.), when Sennacherib forced him to submit.

8. *He smote the Philistines*] This probably occurred between 711 B.C., when the Assyrians marched into Philistia and put down the rebellion of Ashdod, and 701 B.C. when Sennacherib compelled Hezekiah to release Padi the pro-Assyrian king of Ekron. Hezekiah

Philistines unto Gaza and the borders thereof, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

- 9 And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Hezekiah, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Israel, that Shalmaneser king of Assyria came up against
 10 Samaria, and besieged it. And at the end of three years they took it: even in the sixth year of Hezekiah, which
 11 was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Israel, Samaria was taken. And the king of Assyria carried Israel away unto
 12 Assyria, and put them in Halah, and in Habor, *on* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes: because they obeyed not the voice of the LORD their God, but transgressed his covenant, even all that Moses the servant of the LORD commanded, and would not hear it, nor do it.

probably 'smote' the pro-Assyrian Philistines with the help of the contrary party among the Philistines.

[*from the tower of the watchmen &c.*] Cp. xvii. 9, note.

9—12 (cp. xvii. 1—8). THE FALL OF SAMARIA.

9. *in the fourth year*] For this date cp. v. 1, note. This date cannot be reconciled with that given in v. 13 ('in the fourteenth year'). The regnal years of Hezekiah in vv. 9, 10 are probably a later addition to the text; they are not found in xvii. 5, 6.

10. *they took it*] The Heb. word might be read with other vowel points, *he took it*, in agreement with LXX. *κατελάβετο*, and Vulg. *cepit*. The conqueror was not Shalmaneser, but his successor Sargon. Cp. xvii. 6, note.

11. *in Halah, &c.*] Cp. xvii. 6, notes.

12. *because*] Cp. 1 K. ix. 6, 7.

CHS. XVIII. 13—XIX. 37.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The story of Sennacherib is told in chs. xviii. 13—xix. 37 in instalments, the editor of Kings having pieced together parts of different records in order to give as full an account as possible. There is a great break after xviii. 16, and a break almost equally abrupt after xix. 8. Thus the whole story falls into three chief passages as follows:

(1) xviii. 13—16. Sennacherib takes all the fenced cities of Judah. Hezekiah sends a submissive message to the Assyrian king to *Lachish*. Hezekiah pays a heavy fine to Sennacherib.

(2) xviii. 17—xix. 8. 'Tartan and Rab-saris and Rabshakeh' are sent *from Lachish* with a great host to Jerusalem. Rabshakeh

harangues the envoys of Hezekiah. Hezekiah sends a message to Isaiah asking for his prayers. Isaiah promises that Sennacherib shall *hear a report*, return to his own land, and there fall by the sword.

(3) xix. 9—34. Sennacherib hears that Tirhakah king of Ethiopia is advancing against him. He sends a threatening letter by the hand of 'messengers.' Hezekiah takes the letter into the House of the LORD and prays over it. Isaiah sends (unasked) a message to Hezekiah promising that the king of Assyria shall return without attacking Jerusalem, but does not assign any cause for this retirement.

Now the first two passages are knit together by the mention of Lachish as the headquarters of the king of Assyria. They are probably both to be taken as referring to the events of 701 B.C., 'the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah.' But the passages seem to be parallel rather than continuous. Both imply that Sennacherib did not take Jerusalem, but they are written from different points of view. The earlier (xviii. 13—16) is a simple piece of chronicle describing the circumstances under which Hezekiah after a time (cp. v. 7) submitted to Assyria and paid tribute. No comment of a religious character is added, and no hint is given of a Divine interposition to save Jerusalem from the invader. On the other hand, in xviii. 17—xix. 8, an account of the crisis is given from the religious standpoint. Thus viewed the main event was that the LORD did not allow Sennacherib to enter Jerusalem. The payment of tribute is not mentioned, perhaps because it was not the only reason for Sennacherib's retirement. The Assyrian king was hard to appease, and probably he would not have made an accommodation with a city which he boasts of having closely blockaded, if a report of distant troubles, perhaps in Babylonia, had not recalled him home. Hezekiah's tribute was a measure of insurance against a speedy return of Sennacherib.

The third passage (xix. 9—34) when carefully considered does not read like a natural continuation of the second. It is doubtful whether it can refer to the same crisis. It is true that the mention of *Tirhakah* king of Ethiopia may be tentatively reconciled with a date as early as 701 B.C., but this name rather suggests a date at least ten or eleven years later. So again the promise made in v. 32 is difficult to reconcile with the mention of the arrival of the Tartan and a great host before Jerusalem in xviii. 17, and with Sennacherib's explicit statement that he blockaded Jerusalem in 701 B.C. Finally, if Isaiah's second announcement (vv. 20 ff.) followed the first (vv. 6, 7) at an interval of a few days only, or at the most a few weeks, it is singular that the second should contain no allusion to the first.

On the whole, though the evidence is far from complete, it seems probable that Jerusalem was twice delivered from Sennacherib, namely in 701 B.C. and again more than ten years later. On the first occasion Jerusalem was blockaded by an Assyrian army (xviii. 17), on the second the Assyrians did not reach the city (xix. 32). In 701 B.C. Sennacherib retired owing to the receipt of bad news (xix. 7, 36, 37) from Babylon, in 689 B.C. (or some later year) owing to a disaster to his army (xix. 35). To the former occasion must be referred

13 Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah did ¹Sennacherib king of Assyria come up against all the fenced

¹ Heb. *Sanherib*

the two passages xviii. 13—16 and xviii. 17—xix. 8; to the latter xix. 9—34. The sequel to the earlier episode is found in xix. 36, 37, the sequel to the later in xix. 35. (On the whole question see G. A. Smith, *Sennacherib and Jerusalem*, in the *Expositor*, Sixth Series, vol. XII. pp. 215 ff.)

13—16 (cp. Isa. xxxvi. 1). THE SUBMISSION OF HEZEKIAH TO SENNACHERIB.

13. *in the fourteenth year*] This according to the Assyrian inscriptions was the third year of Sennacherib, i.e. 701 B.C. The fall of Samaria, which is fixed with the help of Assyrian chronology in 722 B.C., i.e. twenty-one years earlier, is stated in v. 9 to have occurred in the *sixth* year of Hezekiah, i.e. only eight years before Sennacherib's invasion of Judah. But the two Assyrian dates are unassailable, for room must be found between v. 9 ('Shalmaneser') and v. 13 ('Sennacherib') for the seventeen years' reign of Sargon (722—705 B.C.). Sargon is mentioned in Isa. xx. 1.

Sennacherib] Called *Sin-ah-irib* (or *-irba*) in Assyrian, and *Sannacheribus* by Herodotus (II. 141). He succeeded his father Sargon (Isa. xx. 1) in 705 B.C., and reigned till 681, when he was succeeded by his son Esar-haddon (xix. 37). Palestine was the scene of only a small part of his military activity. In his first expedition (704 B.C.) he marched southward and drove Merodach-baladan out of Babylon. The second year he marched against Illip (south-east of Assyria), and received tribute from the Medes. His third expedition, in the course of which he brought Hezekiah to submission, was directed primarily against the Phœnician and Philistine cities situated on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean. His fourth expedition, like his first, was to the South, against the Chaldeans who dwelt on the lower Euphrates. His fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth years were devoted to expeditions to the North, East, and South of Assyria; the West was left for a time in peace. Of the remaining years of Sennacherib no connected records remain.

against all the fenced cities...and took them] Sennacherib himself on the 'Prism Inscription' (preserved in the British Museum) writes: 'I besieged and took forty-six of his (i.e. Hezekiah's) strong cities, fortresses, and small cities within their borders without number... 200,150 persons, young and old, male and female, horses, mules, asses, camels, oxen, and sheep without number I brought forth out of the midst of them, and numbered them as spoil. Himself I shut up like a caged bird in the midst of Jerusalem his royal city. His cities which I had spoiled I separated from his land and gave them to Mitinti king of Ashdod, Padi king of Ekron, and Sil-Bel king of Gaza, and I made

cities of Judah, and took them. And Hezekiah king of 14 Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; return from me: that which thou puttest on me will I bear. And the king of Assyria appointed unto Hezekiah king of Judah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave *him* all the silver that 15 was found in the house of the LORD, and in the treasures of the king's house. At that time did Hezekiah cut off *the* 16 *gold from* the doors of the temple of the LORD, and *from* the ¹pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria. And the king of Assyria 17 sent ²Tartan and ²Rab-saris and ²Rabshakeh from Lachish

¹ Or, *door posts*

² The titles of Assyrian officers.

his land small. As for Hezekiah the fear of the glory of my lordship overcame him....I caused [treasures]...together with 30 talents of gold and 800 talents of silver, to be sent after me to Nineveh, and he sent his ambassador to pay tribute and to do homage.' (At this point the account of a new campaign begins.)

14 *Lachish*] Cp. xiv. 19, note; also xix. 8, which implies that Lachish was captured by the king. A well-known relief preserved in the British Museum represents Sennacherib on his throne, and the spoils of Lachish being brought out of the city before him.

three hundred talents of silver] Sennacherib however in the 'Prism Inscription,' quoted above, claims to have taken or received 800 talents of silver. The additional 500 talents may have been taken from the forty-six Judæan cities captured by the Assyrians.

15. *in the house of the LORD*] Cp. xii. 18; xvi. 8; 1 K. xiv. 26; xv. 18; 1 Mac. i. 20—23; 2 Mac. ix. 2. Temples were used as treasuries by most of the nations of antiquity.

16. *cut off the gold from the doors*] The temple treasure itself was likely to be at a low ebb, for Hezekiah's predecessor had been obliged to send a special present to the king of Assyria.

17—37 (= Isa. xxxvi. 2—22; cp. 2 Chr. xxxii. 9—19). THE
REPROACHES OF THE RABSHAKEH.

At this point a large portion of Kings (2 K. xviii. 17—xx. 21) is parallel with Isa. xxxvi. 2—xxxix. 8. It can hardly be doubted that the editor of the book of Isaiah borrowed the passage from Kings. Similarly the editor of the book of Jeremiah has reproduced 2 K. xxiv. 18—xxv. 21; 27—30 in Jer. lii. 1—27; 31—34.

17. *Tartan and Rab-saris and Rabshakeh*] These three words are not proper names, but the titles of Assyrian officers. The *tartan* (or *turtan*), mentioned also in Isa. xx. 1, was the military officer next after

to king Hezekiah with a great army unto Jerusalem. And they went up and came to Jerusalem. And when they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper
 18 pool, which is in the high way of the fuller's field. And when they had called to the king, there came out to them Eliakim the son of Hilkiyah, which was over the household, and Shebna the 'scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the
 19 'recorder. And Rabshakeh said unto them, Say ye now to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria,
 20 What confidence is this wherein thou trustest? Thou sayest,

¹ Or, *secretary*

² Or, *chronicler*

the king, and might be called 'Commander-in-chief.' *Rab-saris* is supposed to represent the Assyrian *rab-sha-rishi*, 'chief of the heads (or princes)'; but it is not known what were the duties of this officer. *Rab-shakeh* may be 'chief of the officers' (Assyrian, *shak*), or, again, it may be 'chief of the cup-bearers.' The cup-bearer was an important officer because he had the ear of the king.

The suddenness with which the statement is made that the king of Assyria sent an army against Jerusalem is to be noted. *Vv.* 14—16 seem to say that Hezekiah made a full submission, and that this submission was accepted by Sennacherib; *v.* 17, without any warning, takes us into the midst of hostilities. Did a hitch occur in the negotiations? Our records do not say so. There is in any case a break in the record, due probably to the fact that the narrative is of composite authorship. See the Introductory Note to xviii. 13—xix. 37.

[*by the conduit*] *Vulg. iuxta aquae ductum.* Cp. Isa. vii. 3. The place indicated cannot be identified with any certainty. The *fuller's field* and the *high way* named after it are unknown at present. The *upper pool*, if it still survives, may be the *Mamilla* on the west of Jerusalem, from which a conduit leads eastward into the heart of the present city.

18. *Eliakim...Shebna*] These two men seem, according to Isa. xxii. 15—25, to have been rivals as chief ministers of Hezekiah. We may probably conclude from that passage that Shebna favoured (cp. the mention of 'chariots in *v.* 18), and Eliakim opposed, an alliance with Egypt against Assyria.

[*over the household*] Cp. 1 K. iv. 6, note.

[*scribe...recorder*] Cp. 1 K. iv. 3, note.

19. *the great king, the king of Assyria*] Sennacherib's own description of himself on the 'Prism Inscription' runs, 'Sennacherib, the great king, the mighty king, ...the king of Asshur, the king of the four quarters of the world, the wise shepherd, the favourite of the great gods,' &c.

but they are but ¹vain words, *There is* counsel and strength for the war. Now on whom dost thou trust, that thou hast rebelled against me? Now, behold, thou trustest upon the ²¹ staff of this bruised reed, even upon Egypt; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh king of Egypt unto all that trust on him. But if ²² ye say unto me, We trust in the LORD our God: is not that he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and hath said to Judah and to Jerusalem, Ye shall worship before this altar in Jerusalem? Now therefore, ²³ I pray thee, ²give pledges to my master the king of Assyria, and I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou be able on thy part to set riders upon them. How then canst ²⁴ thou turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put thy trust on Egypt for chariots and for horsemen? Am I now come up without the LORD ²⁵ against this place to destroy it? The LORD said unto me, Go up against this land, and destroy it. Then said Eliakim ²⁶ the son of Hilkiah, and Shebna, and Joah, unto Rabshakeh, Speak, I pray thee, to thy servants in the ³Syrian language;

¹ Heb. *a word of the lips* ² Or, *make a wager with* ³ Heb. *Aramean*

^{21.} *this bruised reed*] The prophet used similar language of Egypt. Cp. Isa. xxx. 1—7; xxxi. 1—3.

^{22.} *whose high places and whose altars*] Cp. v. 4. Sennacherib was right as to the facts; the altars removed by Hezekiah were of course altars of JEHOVAH, but the worship offered at them was mixed with heathen elements.

^{23.} *give pledges to*] Judah never had many horsemen, for the mountainous country round Jerusalem was ill-fitted for the movement of chariots. Cp. 1 K. i. 33; x. 26, with the notes. The Assyrian army on the other hand was well provided with chariots, which were brought as near to the city as the ground allowed. Cp. Isa. xxxi. 7.

^{24.} *captain*] Heb. *paḥath*. Cp. 1 K. x. 15, note.

for chariots and for horsemen] Cp. Isa. xxx. 16; xxxi. 1—3.

^{25.} *The LORD said unto me, Go up*] The Assyrian king claims to punish Hezekiah for the removal of the high places of JEHOVAH. Cp. v. 22.

^{26.} *Syrian*] Marg. *Aramean*, i.e. *Aramaic*. This Aramaic language, of which there are many dialects, was spoken widely in Western Asia, and no doubt the Assyrians learnt the language through their conquests in these regions. From Gen. xxxi. 47 it appears to have been the tongue used by Laban. Parts of Ezra (iv. 8—vi. 18) and Daniel (ii. 4—vii. 28) are written in Aramaic.

for we understand it: and speak not with us in the Jews' language, in the ears of the people that are on the wall.
 27 But Rabshakeh said unto them, Hath my master sent me to thy master, and to thee, to speak these words? *hath he not sent me* to the men which sit on the wall, to eat their
 28 own dung, and to drink their own water with you? Then Rabshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear ye the word of the great
 29 king, the king of Assyria. Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you; for he shall not be able to deliver
 30 you out of his hand: neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of
 31 Assyria. Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, 'Make your peace with me, and come out to me; and eat ye every one of his vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his own
 32 cistern; until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when
 33 he persuadeth you, saying, 'The LORD will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations ever delivered his land out
 34 of the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods

¹ Heb. *Make with me a blessing*

28. *cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language*] The Assyrians, on the shewing of their own Annals, were never tender towards reigning dynasties. They were always ready to support a usurper who was willing to submit to them. Cp. in Israel the case of Pekah and Hoshea (xv. 30).

31. *Make your peace with me*] Lit., as marg., *Make with me a blessing*; LXX. ποιήσατε μετ' ἐμοῦ εὐλογίαν, i.e. acquire with my help a boon for yourselves; Vulg. *facite mecum quod vobis est utile*.

32. *a land of corn and wine*] Cp. the somewhat fuller description given in Deut. viii. 7—9. The description, except for the mention of honey, is that of an agricultural land; it is in contrast with Exod. iii. 8, 'a land flowing with milk and honey,' i.e. a pastoral country with wild honey dropping in the woods (1 Sam. xiv. 26). Palestine had districts of both types.

oil olive] Heb. *the olive of oil*, i.e. the olive which yields oil.

33. *Hath any of the gods...delivered*] Cp. Isa. x. 10, 11.

of Hamath, and of Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivvah? have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? Who are they among all the gods of the 35 countries, that have delivered their country out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand? But the people held their peace, and answered him not a 36 word: for the king's commandment was, saying, Answer him not. Then came Eliakim the son of Hilkiah, which 37 was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and Joah the son of Asaph the recorder, to Hezekiah with their clothes rent, and told him the words of Rabshakeh.

And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that 19 he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD. And he sent Eliakim, 2 which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, unto Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz. And they said unto him, 3

34. *Hamath...Arpad*] Hamath, on the Orontes, called *Hamath the Great* in Amos vi. 2, and Arpad, north of the modern Aleppo, two important cities of Northern Syria, were conquered about 740 B.C. by Tiglath-pileser III.

Sepharvaim] Cp. xvii. 24, note.

Hena, and Ivvah] *Ivvah* might be read with other vowel points, *Avvah*, as in xvii. 24, but no satisfactory identification of the place has been proposed. Of *Hena* nothing whatever is known. With the enumeration of conquests given here cp. Isa. x. 9.

36. *the people held their peace*] (LXX. ἐκώφευσαν, 'they (i.e. the three envoys) were dumb.')

37. *with their clothes rent*] As a sign that they had evil tidings to deliver. The king of Assyria instead of demanding tribute only, had demanded the unconditional surrender of the city.

CH. XIX. 1—8 (=Isa. xxxvii. 1—8). HEZEKIAH APPEALS TO ISAIAH.

The paragraph should be extended to include v. 8.

1. *and went into the house of the LORD*] This clause anticipates the incident recorded in vv. 14 ff.

2. *the elders of the priests*] Jer. xix. 1. They are otherwise called 'the chiefs of the priests' (2 Chr. xxxvi. 14).

Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz] This is the first mention of the great prophet in the book of Kings, yet his activity began many years before. We learn from the book of Isaiah that he received his call in the year that king Uzziah died (Isa. vi. 1); that he had an encounter

Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of contumely: for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. It may be the LORD thy God will hear all the words of Rabshakeh, whom the king of Assyria his master hath sent to reproach the living God, and will rebuke the words which the LORD thy God hath heard: wherefore lift up thy prayer for the remnant that is left. So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah. And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words that thou hast heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me. Behold, I will put a spirit in him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

¹ Or, *wherewith the king of Assyria...hath sent him*

with Abaz during the Syro-Ephraimite crisis (Isa. vii. 1—17), and that one of his Assyrian prophecies was delivered *in the year that king Ahas died* (Isa. xiv. 28). The editor of the book of Kings does not seem to have made any use of the book of Isaiah. Cp. further the INTRODUCTION, p. xxii, note.

3. *rebuke, and...contumely*] The words and the bearing of the rabshakeh had inflicted humiliation upon the Jews by bringing home to them a sense of their utter helplessness.

4. *to reproach the living God*] Cp. xviii. 32—35; 1 Sam. xvii. 26 (marg.).

rebuke the words] The words which had done so much harm are personified.

the remnant] According to Sennacherib 200,000 Jews had been carried captive besides those who had been slain (xviii. 13, note).

7. *I will put a spirit in him*] A Divine agent, a 'spirit' from the LORD, will take possession of Sennacherib, and lead him to perform the Divine will. We may compare the case of Saul, who, when about to arrest David (1 Sam. xix. 23, 24), was seized with what the Greeks would have called a Divine phrenzy (Πανικός), and so was prevented from accomplishing his purpose.

a rumour] Rather, *a report*, Vulg. *nuncium*. This *report* relates probably to some trouble arising on the eastern or south-eastern frontier of Assyria, e.g. to some movement of the king of Elam and of his allies the Chaldeans, against whom Sennacherib made an expedition in the following year (700 B.C.). There is no reference to the report of Tirhakah's advance (v. 9). The Egyptian was a contemptible foe (Isa. xxx. 3—7).

So Rabshakeh returned, and found the king of Assyria 8 warring against Libnah: for he had heard that he was departed from Lachish. And when he heard say of Tirhakah 9 king of Ethiopia, Behold, he is come out to fight against thee: he sent messengers again unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, 10 Let not thy God in whom thou trustest deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria. Behold, thou hast heard what the kings 11 of Assyria have done to all lands, by 'destroying them utterly: and shalt thou be delivered? Have the gods of the 12

¹ Heb. *devoting them*

8. *So Rabshakeh returned*] Rather, *And the rabshakeh returned*. Nothing is said of the return of the *tartan* and the great *army* (xviii. 17). Probably the blockade of Jerusalem was maintained, until Hezekiah submitted (xviii. 14 ff.).

Libnah] Cp. viii. 22, note.

Lachish] Cp. xviii. 14; also xiv. 19, note.

9—19 (=Isa. xxxvii. 9—20). SENNACHERIB'S LETTER AND HEZEKIAH'S PRAYER.

Vv. 9—35 are taken from an account of a later expedition of Sennacherib. See Introductory Note to xviii. 13—xix. 37.

9. *Tirhakah king of Ethiopia*] It is clear that the monarch thus described is to be identified with the Ethiopian prince Taharqa who reigned over Egypt and Ethiopia, 693—667 B.C. A stele records that he was sent northward from the Ethiopian court at Napata (*Gebel Barkal*) into Lower Egypt at the age of twenty before he became 'king.' Combining therefore this fact with the title given him in this verse, we must conjecture (if we refer the whole account given in xviii. 13—xix. 37 to the fourteenth year of Hezekiah) that Tirhakah was acting as viceroy in Lower Egypt in 701, the date of Sennacherib's expedition, and that he was expected to march against the Assyrians. Cp. Flinders Petrie, *Egypt*, vol. III. 296. It is better however to refer this verse and those that follow to a later expedition of Sennacherib, perhaps in 689 B.C., or later.

he sent messengers] His object of course was to destroy any reviving hope which the news concerning Tirhakah might give Hezekiah.

11. *destroying them utterly*] The Heb. word is the same as in Josh. vi. 17, 18, 21, *al*. Sennacherib himself writes, 'Their cities I destroyed, laid waste, burnt with fire. The city of Tilgarimmu I conquered and turned its site into plough land' (*K.I.B.* II. 118).

nations delivered them, which my fathers have destroyed, Gozan, and Haran, and Rezep, and the children of Eden which were in Telassar? Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, of Hena, and Ivvah? And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD. And Hezekiah prayed before the LORD, and said, O LORD, the God of Israel, that sittest upon the cherubim, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; thou hast made heaven and earth. Incline thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open thine eyes, O LORD, and see: and hear the words of Sennacherib, wherewith he hath sent him to reproach the living God. Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, and have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands,

¹ Or, *dwellest between*

12. *Gozan*] Cp. xvii. 6, note.

Haran] A city south-east of Edessa (Urfa), the home for a time of Abraham (Gen. xi. 31; xii. 4).

Rezep] A city called *Rasappa*, south of the Euphrates, north-east of Tadmor.

Eden] A district west of Gozan; extending eastward and westward from the Euphrates, called *Bit-Adini* by the Assyrians.

Telassar] Unknown.

13. *Where is the king of Hamath*] Cp. xviii. 34, notes.

14. *Hezekiah went up*] Though Hezekiah alone is mentioned, it is probable that the heads of the people accompanied him. The circumstances demanded that the appeal to the God of Israel should be made in public.

spread it] Held it in his outspread hand. Cp. 1 K. viii. 22, note. The letter was probably a small clay tablet.

15. *sittest upon the cherubim*] Cp. Exod. xxv. 22. The reference is to the ark.

thou art the God, even thou alone] Cp. 1 K. viii. 23, 60; xviii. 39.

thou hast made heaven and earth] In the books of Samuel and Kings JEHOVAH is usually spoken of as the God of Israel; his wider relation to the whole world is left in the background. Cp. especially 1 K. xviii. 36, 'Thou art God in Israel.' It cannot be doubted that the conception of the nature of God deepened and widened in Israel between the time of Elijah and Isaiah.

16. *to reproach the living God*] Cp. v. 4, note.

18. *have cast their gods into the fire*] This would happen only

wood and stone; therefore they have destroyed them. Now 19 therefore, O LORD our God, save thou us, I beseech thee, out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know ¹that thou art the LORD God, even thou only.

Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, 20 Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard *thee*. This is the word that the LORD hath spoken 21 concerning him: The virgin daughter of Zion hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head ²at thee. Whom hast thou reproached 22 and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice and lifted up thine eyes on high? *even* against the Holy One of Israel. By thy messengers thou hast re- 23 proached the Lord, and hast said, With the ³multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains,

¹ Or, *that thou, O LORD, art God*

² Heb. *after*

³ According to another reading, *driving*

incidentally through the burning of a city. The Assyrian practice was rather to carry off the gods of their enemies, who sometimes made submission in order to recover their gods. Esar-haddon inscribed 'the might of Asshur' on the gods of Iadi, and then returned them to the king of Iadi. Cp. *K.I.B.* II. 130—2. Sennacherib's soldiery, however, on one occasion broke the gods of Babylon in pieces (*K.I.B.* II. 118).

20—23 (= Isa. xxxvii. 21—29). ISAIAH'S MESSAGE; FIRST PART.

The burden of this first part is that the Assyrian king has reached the limit of his great successes. He will not advance further, for the LORD will turn him back.

21. *at thee*] Better as marg., *after thee*. Sennacherib is spoken of as in retreat.

22. *the Holy One of Israel*] This title is found here only in Kings, but it is a characteristic phrase of Isaiah. Cp. Isa. i. 4; v. 19, 24; x. 30. Before the time of Isaiah the word *holy* seems to have been commonly used in the sense of mere aloofness from human kind. Cp. Dan. ii. 11. Isaiah (v. 16) however gives it the more spiritual meaning.

23. *With the multitude of my chariots*] So the *Kēri*, LXX. Vulg. Targ. Marg. as the *Kēthib*.

am I come up] Similar boasts are found on the Inscriptions of several Assyrian kings. Thus Sennacherib himself says, 'In places too steep for my litter, I alighted on my feet; like a wild goat I climbed

to the innermost parts of Lebanon; and I will cut down the tall cedars thereof, and the choice ¹fir trees thereof: and I will enter into his farthest lodging place, the forest of his fruitful field. I have digged and drunk strange waters, and with the sole of my feet will I dry up all the rivers of ²⁵Egypt. Hast thou not heard how I have done it long ago, and formed it of ancient times? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldest be to lay waste fenced cities into ²⁶ruinous heaps. Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded; they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the housetops, and as corn blasted before it be grown ²⁷up. But I know thy sitting down, and thy going out, and

¹ Or, *cypress*

² Or, *defence* Heb. *Mazor*

the steep summits; where my knees rested, I sat down upon the rock, and drank the cold water of the mountain-springs to quench my thirst' (*K.I.B.* II. 98).

the tall cedars] Cp. Isa. xiv. 8, which though written of a king of Babylon, applies equally well to several Assyrian kings.

fir] Cp. 1 K. vi. 15; Ezek. xxvii. 5.

^{24.} *all the rivers of Egypt]* The Heb. word used here for *river* is *yôr*, a word used almost exclusively for the Nile and (in the plural) for its branches. *Egypt* is represented not by the usual *Mizraim*, but by *Mázôr* as in Isa. xix. 6. The marg. reading, *rivers of defence*, LXX. *ῥοταμοὶς περὶοχῆς*, though wrong as a translation, is right in suggesting that the branches of the Nile are the main defence of Egypt. The first Assyrian king to accomplish this threat was Sennacherib's successor Esar-haddon.

^{25.} *Hast thou not heard]* With these words the LORD's answer to the Assyrian begins. Sennacherib does not know that he is only an instrument in JEHOVAH's hand, chosen long ago to fulfil the Divine will, and no more. Cp. Isa. x. 5—7; 13—15.

fenced cities into ruinous heaps] Cp. Tiglath-pileser's words, 'Their cities I destroyed, laid waste, burnt with fire, I changed them into heaps and plough-land' (*K.I.B.* II. 16).

^{26.} *before it be grown up]* The Heb. text seems to need emendation. For the words *before it be grown up* we should perhaps read *Before me is thy rising up*, and the clause should be read with the following verse. See the next note.

^{27.} *But I know &c.]* Taking in the last words of the preceding verse we should translate as follows: *Before me is thy rising up and thy sitting down, and thy going out and thy coming in I know, yea, and thy raging against me.* The order and idiom of the Hebrew marks out the last five words for emphasis.

thy coming in, and thy raging against me. Because of thy 28
 raging against me, and for that ¹thine arrogancy is come up
 into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose,
 and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the
 way by which thou camest. And this shall be the sign unto 29
 thee: ye shall eat this year that which groweth of itself,
 and in the second year that which springeth of the same;
 and in the third year sow ye, and reap, and plant vine-
 yards, and eat the fruit thereof. And ²the remnant that is 30
 escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root down-
 ward, and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall 31
 go forth a remnant, and out of mount Zion they that shall
 escape: the zeal of ³the LORD shall perform this. There- 32

¹ Or, *thy careless ease*
that remain
 and so in Isa. xxxvii. 32

² Heb. *the escaped of the house of Judah*
³ According to another reading, *the LORD of hosts*

28. *thine arrogancy*] The word connotes confidence in the continu-
 ance of prosperity. Cp. Isa. xxxii. 9, 11 ('that are at ease').

my hook...and my bridle] This phrase has reference to an Assyrian
 custom which is shewn on several ancient reliefs. Esar-haddon is
 represented holding Tirhakah of Ethiopia prisoner by a ring passed
 through his cheeks; another Assyrian monarch holds a prisoner by a
 hook and a cord, while putting out his eyes. Cp. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11 (marg.).

29—31 (Isa. xxxvii. 30—32). ISAIAH'S MESSAGE; SECOND PART.

The burden of this second part is that a remnant of the Jewish
 people will survive the ravages of the Assyrian king. The opposite
 result was rather to be expected; namely, that the Jews, like the
 Northern Israelites, would become absorbed in the heathen round
 them.

29. *this shall be the sign unto thee*] Sennacherib retreated, and
 Jerusalem was saved at least a twelve-month before this sign was
 realised. It belongs therefore to the class of 'retrospective' signs.
 The first harvest after Sennacherib's retreat was to be a reminder to
 the Jews that God had delivered them from the Assyrians. For other
 'retrospective' signs see Gen. ix. 13; Exod. iii. 12.

30. *shall again take root*] The population was uprooted, when
 it was forced to take refuge from all the country round in Jerusalem
 for fear of the invaders. The kingdom of Judah lasted for a century
 after the invasion of Sennacherib.

31. *the zeal of the LORD shall perform this*] This is the reading
 of the *K^hhîb*; the *K^hêrî* has *the zeal of the LORD of hosts shall perform*
this, in agreement with Isa. xxxvii. 32. Cp. also Isa. ix. 7.

fore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come unto this city, nor shoot an arrow there, neither shall he come before it with shield, nor cast a mount
 33 against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and he shall not come unto this city, saith the LORD.
 34 For I will defend this city to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.
 35 And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when men arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead

32—34 (= Isa. xxxvii. 33—35). ISAIAH'S MESSAGE; THIRD PART.

The burden of this third part is that Jerusalem is to remain inviolate; the king of Assyria will return home without appearing before it.

32. [*shoot an arrow...come before it with shield*] The Assyrian method of attacking a fortified city included the planting of huge shields or screens from behind which showers of arrows were poured against the defenders on the battlements. This practice is represented on many of the Assyrian reliefs.

a mound] A causeway of earth raised against the wall of a besieged city to enable the besiegers to attack the defenders on the same level. Cp. 2 Sam. xx. 15; Hab. i. 10; 1 Macc. vi. 51. Battering rams were often placed on the mount. Cp. Ezek. iv. 2; xxvi. 8, 9. The *mount* is the Latin *agger*.

33. [*By the way that he came*] In his advance Sennacherib followed the coast road, which passes through the territory of the Philistines and does not approach within twenty miles of Jerusalem.

34. [*for my servant David's sake*] Cp. 1 K. xi. 13.

35 (= Isa. xxxvii. 36; cp. 2 Chr. xxxii. 21). DEATH IN THE CAMP OF THE ASSYRIANS.

This verse forms the sequel to the account given in *vv.* 9—34, and so refers to the second occasion on which Jerusalem was threatened by Sennacherib. God sent a plague (cp. 2 Sam. xxiv. 16) into the Assyrian camp, and 185,000 men were fatally stricken in a single night. There is no trace of such a disaster in the Assyrian or Babylonian records which are at present known, but a passage of Herodotus (ii. 141) seems to preserve a distorted reminiscence of the event. The Greek historian relates on Egyptian authority that 'Sanacharibus king of the Arabians and Assyrians' (*sic*) made an expedition against Egypt in the reign of a king whom Herodotus calls Sethon the priest of Hephaestus. The Egyptian king was deserted by the military caste and reduced to great straits, but Hephaestus sent field mice into the

corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and ³⁶ went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh. And it came ³⁷ to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that ¹ Adrammelech and Sharezer smote him with the

¹ According to another reading, *Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons* and so in Is. xxxvii. 38

camp of the enemy, whose quivers and bows and shield-handles were devoured. Egypt was thus delivered. It has been said that the mouse was a symbol of the plague, and that the story is a symbolical form of that recorded in this verse. All that we are entitled however to say is that the Egyptians had a tradition of an unsuccessful expedition of Sennacherib king of Assyria against Egypt. Neither the Biblical nor the Egyptian account expressly mentions a plague. On the other hand, that a plague broke out in Sennacherib's army is no unlikely event, for on the frontier of Egypt, about the eastern mouths of the Nile, the bubonic plague was almost endemic.

36, 37 (= Isa. xxxvii. 37, 38). ISAIAH'S PREDICTION ACCOMPLISHED.

It seems that v. 36 forms a sequel to v. 7 a, and v. 37 to v. 7 b.

36. *So Sennacherib*] Rather, *And Sennacherib*.

departed, and went] Rather, *took his journey and departed*. The first verb connotes the breaking up of a camp; it is translated 'journeyed' in Num. xxi. 10—13, where the movements of the camp of Israel in the Wilderness are described.

and dwelt at Nineveh] The Heb. historian seems to say that Sennacherib after his return from threatening Jerusalem remained inactive at Nineveh until his assassination (v. 37). Thus the reference cannot be to his return from the West in 701 B.C., for he is known to have been engaged away from his capital in various campaigns down to 689 B.C., when he captured Babylon. Probably Sennacherib 'dwelt in Nineveh' after his return from a campaign in the West which took place later than 689 B.C.

37. *in the house of Nisroch his god*] No god called *Nisroch* is known, and at present no light can be thrown on the meaning of the word from Assyrian sources. The only record of the death of Sennacherib given on the monuments is in the Babylonian Chronicle, which briefly records, 'On the 20th day of the month Tebet Sennacherib king of Assyria was slain by his son in an insurrection.' Some Assyriologists however citing a difficult passage in the annals of Asshur-bani-pal (*K.A.T.*, 85; *K.I.B.*, 192-3) suggest that Sennacherib was murdered at Babylon. If this be so, *Nisroch* is probably a distorted form of *Marduk* (Merodach). The year was probably 682 B.C.

Adrammelech and Sharezer] In Isaiah *Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons*. The same reading is given here by the *K'ri*, LXX. Vulg. Targ. Peshitta. It is however possible that the shorter reading is right. The Babylonian Chronicle (quoted in the last note) mentions one son

sword: and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead.

20 In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz came to him, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Set thine house in order; for 2 thou shalt die, and not live. Then he turned his face to 3 the wall, and prayed unto the LORD, saying, Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before 4 which is good in thy sight. And Hezekiah wept sore. And

only as the murderer. The name of the (one) murderer is given by Abydenus as *Adramelus*, which may be for *Adrammelech*. Of *Sharezer* no probable account can be given.

Ararat] Called by the Assyrians *Urartu*; it was part of the land of Armenia. Its kings intervened in the affairs of Northern Syria in opposition to the Assyrians. The murderers of Sennacherib would naturally expect a welcome in Armenia.

Esar-haddon] According to the Babylonian Chronicle the accession of this king did not take place until nearly a year after his father's death. The insurgents maintained themselves for a time, and, if a broken inscription of Esar-haddon has been correctly interpreted, they put an army in the field against him. *Esar-haddon*, in Assyrian *Asshur-ah-iddina* (i.e. 'Asshur gives a brother') a name suitable for a second son, reigned 681—668 B.C. He led several expeditions against Egypt, and in one of his inscriptions (*K.I.B.* II. 148) reckons Manasseh king of Judah among the twelve kings of the Mediterranean coastlands who were subject to him.

CH. XX. 1—11 (=Isa. xxxviii. 1—8, 21, 22). THE SICKNESS OF HEZEKIAH.

The account in Isaiah is supplemented by the inclusion of 'the writing of Hezekiah,' a psalm commemorating the king's recovery from sickness (Isa. xxxviii. 9—20).

1. *In those days*] i.e. soon after Sennacherib's invasion in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah (xviii. 13). Hezekiah reigned altogether *twenty-nine* years, and since in *v.* 6 *fifteen* years are promised him, it is plain that he had been fourteen years on the throne, when he fell sick.

Set thine house in order] Lit. *give directions to thine household*; LXX. ἐντειλεῖν τῷ οἴκῳ σου.

2. *he turned his face*] Cp. 1 K. xxi. 4.

3. *in truth*] Hezekiah claims that he has been faithful to **JEHOVAH**, and free from idolatry. Cp. xviii. 3—6. He does not claim moral perfection.

it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone ¹out into ²the middle part of the city, that the word of the LORD came to him, saying, Turn again, and say to Hezekiah the ³prince of my ⁵people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD. And I will add unto thy days ⁶fifteen years; and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria; and I will defend this city for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. And Isaiah said, Take a cake of figs. And they took and ⁷laid it on the boil, and he recovered. And Hezekiah said ⁸unto Isaiah, What shall be the sign that the LORD will heal

¹ Or, out of

² According to another reading, *the middle court*

³ Or, leader

4. *into the middle part of the city*] This is the reading of the *Ktthib*. The *Kttri* however together with LXX. Vulg. Targ. Peshitta reads *middle court*, by which the *other court* (1 K. vii. 8), in which the palace was situated, seems to be meant. In the Hebrew (both *Ktthib* and *Kttri*) no preposition is found, so that it is not certain whether the meaning is *into the middle court* (marg.) or *from the middle court*.

5. *the prince*] Cp. 1 K. i. 35, note.

I will heal thee: on the third day] Hezekiah's recovery is gradual, but it is none the less the work of JEHOVAH.

6. *thee and this city*] This promise corresponds with the facts as we know them. Judah was not freed from the necessity of paying tribute to Assyria by the withdrawal of Sennacherib, but Jerusalem itself was saved, and Hezekiah was not carried off.

7. *a cake of figs*] Such plaisters were used in classical times. Cp. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxiii. 63, 'figs stewed in wine and laid on as a plaister cure boils.'

the boil] Heb. *shh'in*, which might mean the boil or hubo of the plague, or it might be equivalent to *shn*, a name applied by the Egyptians to a very severe form of dysentery which causes the abdomen to swell. Cp. A. Macalister, *MEDICINE*, in *Hastings' Dictionary*, iii. 325.

8. *And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah*] The question was no doubt put *before* the recovery mentioned in the preceding verse. The story of the sign is told more briefly in the parallel passage of Isaiah. In both accounts the shadow *returns* ten 'steps' or 'degrees.' It is to be noted, however, that in Kings it is the *shadow*, not the sun itself, which *returns*, whereas in Isa. xxxviii. 8 it is said that *the sun returned*. This difference is important. Such a wonder affecting a particular sun-dial might serve simply as a sign to the owner of the dial, but

me, and that I shall go up unto the house of the LORD the
 9 third day? And Isaiah said, This shall be the sign unto
 thee from the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that
 he hath spoken: 'shall the shadow go forward ten steps,
 10 or go back ten steps? And Hezekiah answered, It is a light
 thing for the shadow to decline ten steps: nay, but let the
 11 shadow return backward ten steps. And Isaiah the prophet
 cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten
 steps backward, by which it had gone down on the dial
 of Ahaz.

12 At that time 'Berodach-baladan the son of Baladan,
 king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah:
 13 for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick. And Heze-

¹ Or, *the shadow is gone forward ten steps, shall it go back &c.*

² Or, *degrees*

³ Heb. *steps*

⁴ In Is. xxxix. 1, *Merodach-*

baladan

affecting the sun itself it would have affected and perhaps destroyed
 our whole Universe. In 2 Chr. xxxii. 31 the sign is spoken of as
 'the wonder which was done in the land'; i.e. it is treated as a *local*
 marvel.

9. *shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or go back ten steps?*] This
 rendering agrees with LXX. Vulg. Targ. Pesbitta. The marg., how-
 ever, gives the real sense of the Hebrew, *the shadow is gone forward*
ten steps, shall it go back ten steps? The prophet asks, 'Shall the
 shadow return the whole circuit it has traversed to-day?'

11. *the dial of Ahaz*] Ahaz was interested in foreign things, and
 perhaps introduced this dial from some other country. Cp. xvi. 10 ff.

12—19 (=Isa. xxxix. 1—8; cp. 2 Chr. xxxii. 31). THE
 AMBASSADORS FROM BABYLON.

12. *Berodach-baladan*] His name is more correctly given in Isa.
 xxxix. 1 as *Merodach-baladan*. He is called *Marduk-apil-iddina*
 ('Marduk gives a son')¹ on the inscriptions of Sargon and Sennacherib,
 with both of whom he came into conflict. Sennacherib declares that in
 the first year of his reign he utterly defeated Merodach-baladan and
 captured Babylon, and that in his fourth expedition in the year after his
 invasion of Judah, he forced Merodach-baladan to take refuge on an
 island in the sea, presumably near the mouths of the Euphrates. The
 embassy to Hezekiah was probably only one out of several sent to the
 kings of Syria to stir them up against Assyria. At the time of his
 embassy Merodach-baladan was no longer king of Babylon *de facto*.

for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick] Enquiry accompanied

¹ Another form of the name is *Marduk-abal-iddin*.

kiah hearkened unto them, and shewed them all the house of his ¹precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the precious oil, and ²the house of his ³armour, and all that was found in his treasures: there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion, that Hezekiah shewed them not. Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Heze- 14 kiah, and said unto him, What said these men? and from whence came they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, They are come from a far country, even from Babylon. And he 15 said, What have they seen in thine house? And Hezekiah answered, All that is in mine house have they seen: there is nothing among my treasures that I have not shewed them. And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD. 16 Behold, the days come, that all that is in thine house, and 17 that which thy fathers have laid up in store unto this day, shall be carried to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith the

¹ Or, *spicery* ² Another reading is, *all the house* ³ Or, *jewels*

by a present was an ancient form of courtesy between allied kings. In the Tell-el-Amarna correspondence between the kings of Egypt and Babylon *cir.* 1400 B.C. the latter complains that the former had not enquired after him.

13. *hearkened unto them*] So Targ. But the text is probably corrupt. LXX. ἐχάρη ἐν' αὐτοῖς, Vulg. *laetatus est in aduentu eorum*. These renderings agree with the reading of Isa. xxxix. 2, *was glad of them*.

the house of his precious things] Assyriologists say that the Heb. *bēth-nēkkōth* is borrowed from the Babylonian *bīl-nakamti*, 'treasure-house.'

the house of his armour] Another reading prefixes the word *all*. Perhaps it was *the house of the forest of Lebanon*. Cp. 1 K. vii. 2.

treasures] The Heb. word is usually translated *treasuries* in the Revised Version.

14. *What said these men?*] Isaiah suspected that a proposal of alliance had been made, and, since Hezekiah does not answer the question, the suspicion was no doubt justified. The prophet held that foreign alliances should be avoided; cp. his denunciations of any connexion with Egypt (Isa. xxx. 1-7; xxxi. 1-3).

17. *shall be carried to Babylon*] It is often supposed that *vv.* 17, 18 refer to the great captivity of Judah which was carried out by Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, in the years 597 and 586 B.C. The chief support for this supposition lies in the mention of *Babylon* as the place of captivity. Babylon, however, was in the hands of the Assyrians intermittently during the reigns of Sennacherib, Esar-haddon, and

18 LORD. And of thy sons that shall issue from thee, which thou shalt beget, shall they take away; and they shall be
 19 eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon. Then said Hezekiah unto Isaiah, Good is the word of the LORD which thou hast spoken. He said moreover, Is it not so, if peace
 20 and truth shall be in my days? Now the rest of the acts of Hezekiah, and all his might, and how he made the pool, and the conduit, and brought water into the city, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of
 21 Judah? And Hezekiah slept with his fathers: and Manasseh his son reigned in his stead.

21 Manasseh was twelve years old when he began to reign;

Asshur-bani-pal; and Esar-haddon styles himself *shakkanak Babilu*, 'governor of Babylon.' Thus a Hebrew writer might reasonably call a king of Assyria by the title of *king of Babylon*. But chiefly it should be noticed that the punishment described here affects the king's house only; it is by no means co-extensive with the Babylonian captivity. Two things are to happen: *first*, the royal treasures will be carried off, *secondly*, 'some' of the king's sons will be taken away to become eunuchs in the conqueror's palace. Nothing is said regarding the temple treasures, nothing is said with regard to captives other than the king's sons. It is more reasonable therefore to suppose that the event here alluded to is the carrying off of Manasseh to Babylon by the Assyrians recorded in 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11. If the king was taken captive, he would hardly be taken without some other members of the royal house, and a heavy fine was invariably exacted under such circumstances by the Assyrians. It is more natural to suppose that the reference is to a near event like this, than to so distant a calamity as the Babylonian captivity.

19. *Good is the word*] An expression of resignation. The postponement of punishment is a sign of mercy, and Hezekiah accepts it as such. Cp. 1 K. xxi. 29.

20, 21 (= 2 Chr. xxxii. 32, 33; cp. 2 Chr. xxxii. 3, 4). THE SUMMARY OF THE REIGN OF HEZEKIAH.

20. *all his might*] Cp. xviii. 8.

the pool] The *pool* meant is perhaps 'Ain Silwan, 'the pool of Siloam'; and the *conduit* the rock-hewn tunnel which leads to it from the Virgin's Pool. Cp. 2 Chr. xxxii. 30; Eccles. xlvi. 17.

CII. XXI. 1—18. MANASSEH KING OF JUDAH.

This section is one more illustration of the fact that Kings is not a book of annals, but rather a collection of prophetic comments on Hebrew history. No narrative is given of the events of the reign of

and he reigned five and fifty years in Jerusalem; and his mother's name was Hephzi-bah. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, after the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel. For he built again the high places which Hezekiah his father had destroyed; and he reared up altars for Baal,

Manasseh. In *vv.* 1, 2, 17, 18 the usual brief summary of merely formal details appears, and the verdict is passed that this king 'did that which was evil.' What remains (*vv.* 3—16) is an indictment of Manasseh, part of which (*vv.* 10—15) is directly ascribed to 'the prophets,' while the rest is written as a prophet imbued with the spirit of Deuteronomy might have written it. The only 'acts' of Manasseh which are recorded are (1) that he restored the high places, *v.* 3; (2) that he built altars for the 'Host of Heaven' in the Temple courts, *v.* 5; (3) that he put an image of the goddess Asherah into the Temple, *v.* 7. We may perhaps add (4) that he shed 'very much' innocent blood, *v.* 16. On the other hand, nothing is said of his relations with the king of Assyria, though according to the Assyrian inscriptions Manasseh (together with other kings of the West) was summoned into Esar-haddon's presence, and commanded to furnish building materials for his new palace, and though Manasseh was one of the twenty-two kings of the Mediterranean shore who brought valuable gifts to Asshur-bani-pal on his first expedition against Egypt. The section, exclusive of *vv.* 1, 2, 17, 18, seems to belong to a time when the Babylonian exile had already begun (see *v.* 8, note), and the political details of Manasseh's reign had lost their interest.

1—9 (= 2 Chr. xxxiii. 1—9). THE APOSTASY OF MANASSEH.

1. *Hephsi-bah*] The meaning of the name is 'She in whom is my delight.' It is used as a symbolical name of Zion in Isa. lxii. 4.

2. *after the abominations of the heathen*] The same thing is said of his grandfather Ahaz (xvi. 3).

3. *he built again the high places*] This rebuilding would consist of restoring the altar, setting up again the images of the gods, and re-erecting the monoliths (*maççibôth*). As a high place was simply a levelled space in the open air, there was no building in the usual sense of the word to be done. Cp. 1 K. xi. 7, note.

which Hezekiah his father had destroyed] Cp. xviii. 4. Manasseh returned to the religious practices of his grandfather Ahaz, partly because he, like his grandfather, was closely dependent on Assyria (cp. xix. 37, note on *Esar-haddon*). Probably Isaiah was not alive when Manasseh reversed Hezekiah's religious policy. The tradition found in the Talmud and in the *Ascension of Isaiah* (an apocryphal work of the First Century of our era) that the prophet was sawn

and made an Asherah, as did Ahab king of Israel, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them. And he built altars in the house of the LORD, whereof the LORD said, In Jerusalem will I put my name. And he built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD. And he made his son to pass through the fire, and practised augury, and used enchantments, and dealt with them that had familiar spirits, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of the LORD, to provoke him to anger. And he set the graven image of Asherah, that he had made, in the house of which the LORD said to David and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel, will I put my name for ever: neither will I cause the feet of Israel to wander any more out of the land which I gave their

¹ Or, *appointed* Heb. *made*

asunder by Manasseh, though ancient, is improbable. Nothing is said of this martyrdom either in Kings (though *vv.* 10—16 give an opportunity for mentioning it, if it took place), or in Chronicles, or again in Ecclesiasticus *xlviii.* 22—25.

reared up altars for Baal, and made an Asherah] Cp. 1 K. *xvi.* 32, 33. note. For *Asherah* see 1 K. *xiv.* 23, note.

all the host of heaven] Cp. *xvii.* 16, note. This worship was apparently new in Judah. Manasseh in this shewed himself more fully under Assyrian influence than Ahaz.

4. In Jerusalem will I put my name] 1 K. *viii.* 29; *lx.* 3. Cp. Deut. *xii.* 11.

5. the two courts] Cp. 1 K. *vi.* 36, note.

6. he made his son to pass] LXX. *his sons*, a reading which agrees better with the frequentative form of the verb used here. What he did, he did more than once. Cp. *xvi.* 3, note.

practised augury] What particular form of augury is here referred to, is unknown.

used enchantments] Cp. *xvii.* 17, note.

dealt with them that had familiar spirits] Better as marg., *appointed them that had familiar spirits*. He attached such persons to his court, to consult in case of need. Cp. 1 Sam. *xxviii.* 3—25.

and with wizards] Rather, *and wizards*. Cp. Isa. *vliii.* 19.

7. Asherah] Here no doubt the name of a goddess. Cp. *xvli.* 16; 1 K. *xv.* 13, marg.

In this house] Cp. *v.* 4, note.

8. to wander any more out of the land] Israel might be said to have 'wandered' out of Canaan into Egypt in Jacob's days through stress of

fathers; if only they will observe to do according to all that I have commanded them, and according to all the law that my servant Moses commanded them. But they hearkened 9 not: and Manasseh seduced them to do that which is evil more than did the nations, whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel. And the LORD spake by his servants 10 the prophets, saying, Because Manasseh king of Judah hath 11 done these abominations, and hath done wickedly above all that the Amorites did, which were before him, and hath made Judah also to sin with his idols: therefore thus saith 12 the LORD, the God of Israel, Behold, I bring such evil upon Jerusalem and Judah, that whosoever heareth of it, both his ears shall tingle. And I will stretch over Jerusalem the line 13 of Samaria, and the plummet of the house of Ahab: and I will wipe Jerusalem as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down. And I will cast off the remnant of 14 mine inheritance, and deliver them into the hand of their

famine, but the language is more suitable, if the Babylonian captivity be referred to. The phrase involves an anachronism.

10—14 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 10). JUDGEMENT PRONOUNCED THROUGH THE PROPHETS UPON MANASSEH.

10. *the prophets*] Cp. Jer. xv. 1—4, where pestilence and sword and famine and captivity are denounced against Judah 'because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem.'

11. *the Amorites*] Cp. 1 K. xxi. 26, note.

12. *both his ears shall tingle*] Cp. 1 Sam. iii. 11; Jer. xix. 3.

13. *the line...the plummet*] Both these are implements of building (cp. Zech. i. 16), not of pulling down: it is the epithet attached to each which shews that destruction is meant. It would seem that the people were deluding themselves with hopes of reviving prosperity and of expansion. They looked for the line and the plummet to be used for the enlargement or at least for the restoration of their city. The prophetic message answers their expectations with bitter irony: 'Your building line will prove to be *the line of Samaria*, and your plummet *the plummet of the house of Ahab*.' Both Samaria and the house of Ahab had been destroyed.

14. *I will cast off the remnant*] Hitherto the announcement of impending judgement had been tempered with mercy, and a promise had been added that though the nation should be punished, the 'remnant' should escape and flourish again. Cp. xix. 30, 31.

enemies; and they shall become a prey and a spoil to all
 15 their enemies; because they have done that which is evil in
 my sight, and have provoked me to anger, since the day
 their fathers came forth out of Egypt, even unto this day.
 16 Moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he
 had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; beside his
 sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which
 17 was evil in the sight of the LORD. Now the rest of the acts
 of Manasseh, and all that he did, and his sin that he sinned,
 are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the
 18 kings of Judah? And Manasseh slept with his fathers, and
 was buried in the garden of his own house, in the garden of
 Uzza: and Amon his son reigned in his stead.
 19 Amon was twenty and two years old when he began to

16. *innocent blood*] A reference to acts of oppression. The sacrifice of children by fire has already been mentioned (*v.* 6).
made Judah to sin] i.e. drove them to apostasy from JEHOVAH.

17, 18 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11—20). THE SUMMARY OF MANASSEH'S REIGN.

The author of Chronicles is silent as to the judgement pronounced on Manasseh in *vv.* 11—16, but he records a punishment which fell upon the king in his lifetime, and also the king's repentance. 'The captains of the host of the king of Assyria' took Manasseh 'with hooks' and carried him off 'to Babylon.' Upon this he repented, was restored to Jerusalem, and, reversing his old religious policy, commanded Judah to serve JEHOVAH. This story has been doubted but on insufficient grounds. The mention of Babylon in 2 Chr. xxxiii. 11 as the place of Manasseh's captivity raises no serious difficulty (cp. *xx.* 17, note), nor can any stress be laid on the silence of Kings, for there nothing whatever is said of the political events of the fifty-five years of this king's reign. Nor again does the fact that the compiler of Kings condemns Manasseh without qualification offer an insuperable difficulty. Manasseh's captivity and repentance may have occurred late in his reign, too late indeed to do anything towards staying the impending ruin. In this case the compiler of Kings is fully justified in describing his reign simply as evil.

18. *in the garden of his own house, in the garden of Uzza*] *Uzza* may be another form of *Uzziah* or *Azariah*. Cp. *xv.* 1, note.

19—26 (= 2 Chr. xxxiii. 21—25). THE REIGN OF AMON.

19. *Amon*] It is noteworthy that the names by which the kings of Judah who were faithful to JEHOVAH are known in the book of Kings, have the termination *-iah*, which is a shortened form of JEHOVAH; thus

reign; and he reigned two years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Meshullemeth the daughter of Haruz of Jotbah. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the 20 LORD, as did Manasseh his father. And he walked in all 21 the way that his father walked in, and served the idols that his father served, and worshipped them: and he forsook the 22 LORD, the God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD. And the servants of Amon conspired against 23 him, and put the king to death in his own house. But the 24 people of the land slew all them that had conspired against king Amon; and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his stead. Now the rest of the acts of Amon 25 which he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? And he was buried in 26 his sepulchre in the garden of Uzza: and Josiah his son reigned in his stead.

Josiah was eight years old when he began to reign; and 22 he reigned thirty and one years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Jedidah the daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath. And he did that which was right in the eyes of 2

Uzziah, Hezekiah, Josiah. Similarly in the name *Jotham* it is probable that the first syllable represents the name *JEHOVAH*. On the other hand the unfaithful kings bear the names *Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon*, from which any element derived from the name of Israel's God is absent. These three names have a 'secular' sound, when they are compared with the other four.

Jotbah] This may be the place mentioned in Num. xxxiii. 33, 34; Deut. x. 7 (Heb. text) as one of the halting-places of Israel during the desert wanderings. It was 'a land of brooks of water.' It might at one time be reckoned to Judah (as in the *Onomasticon*), and at another to the desert, for there was no well-defined frontier to Judah on the south.

23. *the servants of Amon*] Cp. xii. 20.

24. *the people of the land*] Cp. xiv. 21.

26. *in the garden of Uzza*] Cp. v. 18, note.

CH. XXII. 1, 2 (= 2 Chr. xxxiv. 1, 2). THE ACCESSION OF JOSIAH.

1. *Jedidah*] Meaning, 'Beloved.' Cp. 2 Sam. xii. 25 with margin. *Bozkath*] Mentioned in Josh. xv. 39 in connexion with Lachish. It was in the south-west of Judah.

the LORD, and walked in all the way of David his father, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left.

3 And it came to pass in the eighteenth year of king Josiah, that the king sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, the son of Meshullam, the scribe, to the house of the LORD,
4 saying, Go up to Hilkiah the high priest, that he may sum

2. *turned not aside to the right hand or to the left*] Cp. Deut. v. 32 [29 Heb.]; xvii. 11, 30; xxviii. 14. No commendation so strong as this is given in the book of Kings to any Jewish king except Hezekiah. Cp. xviii. 5, 6.

3-20 (= 2 Chr. xxxiv. 8-28). REPAIR OF THE TEMPLE.
DISCOVERY OF THE BOOK OF THE LAW.

The Chronicler puts the account of the cleansing of the land from idolatry (2 Chr. xxxiv. 3-7 = 2 K. xxiii. 4-20) *before* the account of the repair of the Temple and the discovery of the book of the Law. It is, however, more probable that the discovery of the book preceded the vigorous measures taken against idolatry. It may be doubted whether it would have been possible to destroy cherished symbols and to defile high places which had been venerated for centuries, unless an impetus had been given to reforming zeal by the publication of the contents of the book of the Law of Moses.

3. *in the eighteenth year*] The story of the restoration of the Temple begins abruptly, probably because the compiler of Kings omitted the beginning of the document which lay before him. The direction given to Hilkiah in v. 4 is to 'sum' the money, i.e. to make up the account of a collection which had been made. This order implies a previous order that money should be collected for the repair of the Temple. We may conclude that Josiah's first step was to make some such arrangements for raising the necessary sum, as Joash had made before him. Cp. xii. 7-9. This collection may have been started some time before the eighteenth year of Josiah, for Judah had been drained of its resources under Hezekiah and Manasseh to pay the tribute imposed by the Assyrians.

Shaphan] His descendants played an important part during the last days of the Jewish monarchy. His son Ahikam saved the prophet Jeremiah from being put to death (Jer. xxvi. 24); another son, Gemariah, was one of the princes who made intercession to Jehoiakim that he would not burn Jeremiah's roll (Jer. xxxvi. 12, 25). His grandson, Gedaliah, was appointed ruler over the people that remained in Judah, after the rest had been carried captive by Nebuchadrezzar (xxv. 22; Jer. xl. 5-xli. 10).

4. *Hilkiah*] Cp. 1 Chr. vi. 13. There is no reason to suppose that he is to be identified with the father of Jeremiah, for though Jeremiah was of priestly family, he did not belong to Jerusalem (Jer. i. 1; xxxii. 6, 7; xxxvii. 11, 12).

the money which is brought into the house of the LORD, which the keepers of the ¹door have gathered of the people: and let them deliver it into the hand of the workmen that ⁵ have the oversight of the house of the LORD: and let them give it to the workmen which are in the house of the LORD, to repair the breaches of the house; unto the carpenters, ⁶ and to the builders, and to the masons; and for buying timber and hewn stone to repair the house. Howbeit there ⁷ was no reckoning made with them of the money that was delivered into their hand; for they dealt faithfully. And ⁸ Hilkiyah the high priest said unto Shaphan the scribe, I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD.

¹ Heb. *threshold*

the high priest] Lit. *the great priest*, LXX. τὸν ἄρχιερέα τὸν μέγαν. In xxv. 18 the title is *chief* ('head') *priest*. Cp. xi. 9, note.

that he may sum] Lit. *bring to an end*. From this moment the collection of money for the restoration of the Temple was to cease. LXX. (σφραγίσσον, 'seal up') follows, it seems, a different reading of the Hebrew. Money was collected into bags or purses, which were then closed and *sealed*. Cp. Job xiv. 17.

the money which is brought] Cp. xii. 4, 9.

the keepers of the door] These are described in 2 Chr. xxxiv. 9 as 'the Levites,' probably by an anachronism. Though in the Chronicler's own day the guardianship of the Temple was entrusted to Levitical porters (1 Chr. xxvi. 1—19), it is improbable that this was the case before the Captivity. In xi. 18 the guards are called simply 'officers' and in xii. 9 they are described not as 'Levites' but as priests. The Chronicler further speaks of the workmen who had the oversight of the restoration (v. 9) as Levites, but here again he seems to be thinking of the practice of his own day. The origin of the Temple Levites and the date at which they attained the position which they held in the Chronicler's time (Third Century B.C.) are questions beset with many difficulties.

⁵ *of the workmen*] The same Heb. phrase is translated in xii. 11 [12 Heb.] *of them that did the work*. In both passages however the meaning is rather *of them that appointed the work*, i.e. assigned the tasks to the carpenters, builders, and masons.

and let them give it &c.] These words are superfluous, being only a various reading of the first half of the verse.

⁶ *unto the carpenters, and to...and to*] Rather, *for the carpenters, and for...and for*.

for buying timber and hewn stone] Probably these were supplied as in Solomon's time by the Tyrians and their allies. Cp. 1 K. v. 10, 17, 18.

⁷ *there was no reckoning made*] Cp. xii. 15.

⁸ *I have found the book of the law*] The term 'book of the law'

And Hilkiab delivered the book to Shaphan, and he read it.
 9 And Shaphan the scribe came to the king, and brought the king word again, and said, Thy servants have 'emptied out the money that was found in the house, and have delivered it into the hand of the workmen that have the oversight of
 10 the house of the LORD. And Shaphan the scribe told the king, saying, Hilkiab the priest hath delivered me a book.
 11 And Shaphan read it before the king. And it came to pass, when the king had heard the words of the book of the law,

¹ Or, *poured out*

(*sēpher tōrah*) or 'book of the law of the LORD' means in late passages of the Old Testament, e.g. in 2 Chr. xvii. 9; Neh. viii. 3, 18, the whole Pentateuch. Scholars have shewn however that the whole five books were not written at one time, but are due to a work of compilation, which went on for several centuries. The earliest parts may reach back to Moses, the later parts, i.e. certain portions of Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers, were added probably after the return from the Babylonian Captivity. The 'book of the law' mentioned here must therefore have been part only, not the whole, of the Pentateuch. There is however no direct statement in Kings to tell us which part this was, but we have reason to identify it with Deuteronomy from the record of the impression made on Josiah by the reading of the book (*v.* 13) and from the account of the results which followed (xxiii. 3—23). Josiah found in the book that a covenant had been made between JEHOVAH and the people, and that (since the terms of the covenant had been broken) Judah stood in a position of extreme danger. Now these are just the facts which Deuteronomy would have taught him with unique force and eloquence. The facts of the existence of the Covenant and of the danger of breaking it are vividly set forth in Deut. iv. 1—40; v.; ix.; xxviii.; xxix. The results which followed from the reading of the book point also to Deuteronomy. Josiah carried out a more thorough destruction of idolatry than any king before him. He took moreover a new step of constructive reform by bringing the priests of the high places into Jerusalem, and providing for their support there (xxiii. 8, 9). By this last decisive step he centralized all public worship in Jerusalem, and made effective for the first time in the history of Israel the command given in Deut. xii. 10—14. His destruction of idolatrous altars and symbols was similarly in close accordance with such passages as Deut. vii. 1—5; xii. 2, 3. The further questions whether Josiah's 'book of the law' contained the whole of Deuteronomy, and whether it contained beside Deuteronomy other parts of the Pentateuch, e.g. some parts of Exodus, cannot be discussed here. The view that the moving cause of the king's reformation was the book of Deuteronomy in some form is not seriously to be gainsaid.

9. *the money*] Probably not coined money. Cp. xii. 4, note.

that he rent his clothes. And the king commanded Hilkiah ¹² the priest, and Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Achbor the son of Micaiah, and Shaphan the scribe, and Asaiah the king's servant, saying, Go ye, inquire of the LORD for me, ¹³ and for the people, and for all Judah, concerning the words of this book that is found: for great is the wrath of the LORD that is kindled against us, because our fathers have not hearkened unto the words of this book, to do according unto all that which is ¹written concerning us. So Hilkiah ¹⁴ the priest, and Ahikam, and Achbor, and Shaphan, and Asaiah, went unto Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe; (now she dwelt in Jerusalem in the ²second quarter;) and they communed with her. And she said unto ¹⁵

¹ Or, *enjoined us*

² Heb. *Mishneh*

11. *rent his clothes*] Cp. v. 7; xi. 14; xviii. 37; xix. 1.

12. *Ahikam the son of Shaphan*] Cp. v. 3, note on *Shaphan*.

Achbor the son of Micaiah] In 2 Chr. xxxiv. 20, 'Abdon the son of Micah.'

Asaiah the king's servant] Probably a confidential minister is meant. His position was perhaps like that of 'the lord on whose hand the king leaned' (vii. 2).

13. *for the people, and for all Judah*] In 2 Chr. xxxiv. 21, 'for them that are left in Israel and in Judah.'

that is kindled] So LXX. (A), ἡ ἐκκεκαυμένη. LXX. (B), however, has ἡ ἐκκεχυμένη, 'that is poured out,' in agreement with 2 Chr. xxxiv. 21. But the wrath was not 'poured out' until the days of Nebuchadrezzar.

written concerning us] Rather as marg., *enjoined us*.

14. *Huldah the prophetess*] Jeremiah had received the call to be a prophet five years before (Jer. i. 2), but he shrank from the mission, and it is probable that he did not gain the ear of his countrymen till towards the close of Josiah's reign. Of Huldah we know nothing beyond what is told us in this chapter and in the parallel passage of Chronicles.

Tikvah, the son of Harhas] In 2 Chr. xxxiv. 22 (R.V.), 'Tokhath, the son of Hasrah.' Nothing is known about him.

keeper of the wardrobe] Lit. *keeper of the garments*. The title is in the masc., and refers to Shallum. There is nothing to shew whether he was a king's officer, or a temple officer. Cp. x. 22. The Heb. word *bēgādīm* is applied to king's robes (xix. 1), to priestly garments (Exod. xxviii. 2, 4), and to clothes in general.

the second quarter] Cp. Zeph. i. 10. Perhaps *second district* would be a better translation, for there is no word in the Hebrew representing

16 them, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: Tell ye the man that sent you unto me, Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will bring evil upon this place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, even all the words of the book which the king of
 17 Judah hath read: because they have forsaken me, and have burned incense unto other gods, that they might provoke me to anger with all the work of their hands; therefore my wrath shall be kindled against this place, and it shall not be
 18 quenched. But unto the king of Judah, who sent you to inquire of the LORD, thus shall ye say to him, Thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel: As touching the words which
 19 thou hast heard, because thine heart was tender, and thou didst humble thyself before the LORD, when thou heardest what I spake against this place, and against the inhabitants thereof, that they should become ¹a desolation and a curse, and hast rent thy clothes, and wept before me; I also have
 20 heard thee, saith the LORD. Therefore, behold, I will gather thee to thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to

¹ Or, *an astonishment*

quarter. Jerusalem according to its ancient physical features might well be reckoned as divided into two districts, eastern and western, by the deep valley of the Tyropœon. From Neh. lii. 9, 12 it appears as if in Nehemiah's time the city was divided into two halves for administrative purposes; and in Neh. xi. 9, 'second over the city' is rendered by some 'over the second part (*Mishneh*) of the city.' The translation of A.V., 'in the college,' is supported only by the Targum, and is highly fanciful.

16. *Behold, I will bring evil upon this place*] Cp. xxi. 12; Jer. xix. 3. For the phrase 'this place,' rather than 'Jerusalem,' see Deut. xii. 11, 14. It is upon 'the place' which the LORD once 'chose to put His name there' that He will now 'bring evil.'

17. *my wrath shall be kindled*] In 2 Chr. xxxiv. 25, 'is my wrath poured out.' Cp. v. 13, note. God's wrath is kindled against 'this place,' because in 'this place' altars had been erected to other gods. Cp. xxi. 4.

19. *tender*] The opposite of 'stubborn.'

didst humble thyself] The Heb. word is the same as in 1 K. xxi. 29. *a desolation*] Cp. 1 K. ix. 8.

a curse] The same Heb. word as in Jer. xxix. 22.

20. *thou shalt be gathered*] The verb 'gather' is used in Hebrew of bringing an individual into the company of others. Cp. Gen. xxv. 8.

thy grave in peace, neither shall thine eyes see all the evil which I will bring upon this place. And they brought the king word again.

And the king sent, and they gathered unto him all the 23 elders of Judah and of Jerusalem. And the king went up 2 to the house of the LORD, and all the men of Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem with him, and the priests, and the prophets, and all the people, both small and great: and he read in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant which was found in the house of the LORD. And 3 the king stood ¹by the pillar, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all

¹ Or, *on the platform*

neither shall thine eyes see] The same phrase as in Gen. xxi. 16; xliv. 34. It means to look upon with the attention caused either by grief, as in these passages, or by joy as in x. 16 (see note there).

CH. XXIII. 1—3 (= 2 Chr. xxxiv. 29—32 a). THE RENEWAL OF THE COVENANT WITH JEHOVAH.

1. *and they gathered*] It is better to read, and gathered (sing.); LXX. *kal ovrhgyayev*.

2. *the priests, and the prophets*] In Jeremiah the two classes are frequently thus mentioned together. Cp. Jer. xiii. 13; xxvi. 7. When prophets are thus spoken of in the mass, we must think of them rather as men specially devoted to the service of God (like the monks of the Christian Church), than as men with a special Divine gift like Isaiah or Jeremiah. The Chronicler gives, 'the priests and the Levites' (cp. xxii. 4, note on *the keepers of the door*).

he read] Or, *one read*. The subject of the verb according to Heb. idiom may be indefinite. For another great occasion on which the book of the law was read see Neh. viii.

the book of the covenant] In xxii. 8 it is called 'the book of the law'; but a book which consisted almost entirely of the greater part of Deuteronomy might be called with equal fitness by either title.

3. *by the pillar*] Cp. xi. 14 (with marg.). Solomon (according to 2 Chr. vi. 13) stood on a similar occasion on 'a brasen scaffold' which he had made.

made a covenant] Lit. *made the covenant*, i.e. renewed the Deuteronomic covenant. Similarly 'build' is used for 'rebuild' in 1 K. ix. 17.

to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes] A phrase characteristic of Kings, but derived from Deuteronomy. Cp. 1 K. ii. 3; Deut. vi. 17.

his heart, and all his soul, to confirm the words of this covenant that were written in this book: and all the people stood to the covenant. And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, and the priests of the second order, and the

¹ Or, perform

with all his heart, and all his soul] Another similarly characteristic phrase. Cp. 1 K. ii. 4; Deut. iv. 29.

to confirm] Marg. to perform. As this was the renewal of a covenant, the former is the better rendering.

and all the people stood to the covenant] No parallel can be found to the phrase 'stood to the covenant,' for which perhaps we should expect 'entered into the covenant' (Jer. xxxiv. 10). Probably the text has suffered, for the phrase seems to be a fragment of a much longer statement, such as, 'they sacrificed a calf, and cut it in twain, and all the people passed between the parts thereof.' Cp. Jer. xxxiv. 18, where a similar solemn covenant is referred to. The Heb. words for 'stood' and 'passed,' and those for 'to the covenant' and 'between the parts thereof' respectively have a general resemblance to each other, and would be readily confused by a hasty scribe. The writer of Chronicles was evidently at a loss, for he omitted altogether the Heb. word which is here translated to the covenant (2 Chr. xxxiv. 32).

4—20 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 3—7, 33). JOSIAH DESTROYS THE SYMBOLS OF IDOLATRY.

The forms of the verbs used in the Hebrew text of vv. 4—14 shew that this section is composed of two passages which have been interwoven with one another. The starting point for unravelling them is the statement of v. 4 that the king gave certain commands to the priest Hilkiah. These commands are easily to be identified by the forms of the verbs used, which are different from the forms of ordinary narrative. The directions are these: v. 4, to bring forth the idolatrous 'vessels' or 'things' (a word of quite general meaning) from the Temple; v. 5 a, to suppress the *Chēmārīm*; v. 8 b, to break down the high places erected on the walls of Jerusalem; v. 10, to defile Topheth; v. 14, to destroy the *maqēbōth* and *āshērīm*. - The execution of the commands is narrated in vv. 5 b—8 a, and 11—13. Only in the last two verses is the king introduced as the actor, and then it is a case of undoing the idolatrous acts of previous kings. Most of the work was no doubt done by the priests and their assistants under some compulsion from the king. The severity exercised against the idolatrous priests, who were slain by their altars and then burnt upon them (v. 20), no doubt helped to enforce the execution of the king's orders. The Deuteronomic law enjoined that Israelites who fell away to idolatry were to be put to death without mercy (Deut. xiii. 12—18).

4. the high priest] Cp. xxii. 4, note.

and the priests of the second order] Better, and the second priests. Cp. xxv. 18, where the same ranks are given: (1) 'high' or 'chief

keepers of the ¹door, to bring forth out of the temple of the LORD all the vessels that were made for Baal, and for the Asherah, and for all the host of heaven: and he burned them without Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried the ashes of them unto Beth-el. And he put down the ⁵idolatrous priests, whom the kings of Judah had ordained to burn incense in the high places in the cities of Judah, and in the places round about Jerusalem; them also that burned incense unto Baal, to the sun, and to the moon, and to the ⁶planets, and to all the host of heaven. And he brought out the Asherah from the house of the LORD, without Jerusalem, unto the brook Kidron, and burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small to powder, and cast the powder thereof upon the graves of the 'common people.

¹ Heb. *threshold* ³ Heb. *Chemarim* See Hos. x. 5, Zeph. i. 4
² Or, *twelve signs* ⁴ Heb. *children of the people*

priest'; (2) 'second priest' or 'priests'; (3) 'keepers of the door.' The Targum gives the later title of *Sagan* or *Sagan* (i.e. 'deputy of the High Priest') to the second rank. A high priest might of course have more than one deputy, so that it is unnecessary to read the singular here.

the keepers of the door] Cp. xxii. 4, note.

for the Asherah] Rather, **for Asherah**. Cp. xxi. 4.

he burned them] The wooden symbol of Asherah and any earthen vessels would be destroyed by fire. Vessels of metal however after passing through the fire would according to the law of Num. xxxi. 22, 23 be accounted clean.

Kidron] Cp. 1 K. xv. 13, note.

unto Beth-el] To desecrate the idolatrous sanctuary there. Cp. vv. 15, 16.

⁵ *the idolatrous priests*] Cp. marg. The Heb. word means simply 'priests,' but since the usual term for priests of JEHOVAH is *kōhānīm* (plur. of *kōhēn*), *Chemarim* has the connotation of *irregular* or *foreign* priests.

to burn incense] An impossible translation; the words are corrupt, and should be omitted.

the planets] Marg. *the twelve signs*, i.e. of the Zodiac. Cp. xvii. 16, note.

⁶ *the graves of the common people*] Lit. *the grave of the sons of the people* (Jer. xxvi. 23). The Heb. text offers no satisfactory sense. A small change in the Hebrew would give 'the grave (or 'holy place') of the Son of Hinnom,' and this reading is not improbable. Children were burnt in the valley of the Son of Hinnom (Jer. vii. 31; xix. 2-6), which was part of the valley of the Kidron (1 K. xv. 13). The ashes would be thrown here in order to desecrate an idolatrous sanctuary.

7 And he brake down the houses of the sodomites, that were
 in the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings
 8 for the Asherah. And he brought all the priests out of the
 cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests
 had burned incense, from Geba to Beer-sheba; and he brake
 down the high places of the gates that were at the entering
 in of the gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which were
 9 on a man's left hand at the gate of the city. Nevertheless
 the priests of the high places came not up to the altar of
 the LORD in Jerusalem, but they did eat unleavened bread
 10 among their brethren. And he defiled Topheth, which is
 in the valley of the children of Hinnom, that no man
 might make his son or his daughter to pass through the
 11 fire to Molech. And he took away the horses that the

¹ Or, tents Heb. houses

² According to another reading, son

7. *wove hangings for the Asherah*] Rather, *wove tents* (Heb. 'houses') *for Asherah*, i.e. for the celebration of the impure rites of the goddess.

8. *brought all the priests out of the cities of Judah*] This was in accordance with the Deuteronomic law that sacrifice was to be offered in one place only,—Jerusalem.

Geba] Cp. 1 K. xv. 22. It is mentioned as the northern extremity of Judah.

Beer-sheba] Cp. 1 K. iv. 25, note.

the high places of the gates] The roofs of houses were sometimes used as places of sacrifice. Cp. Jer. xix. 13; xxxii. 29. The high places mentioned here were perhaps on the roofs of the towers by which the gates were defended. It was probably on such a spot that Mesha of Moab offered up his son as a burnt offering 'upon the wall' (iii. 27).

9. *they did eat unleavened bread*] i.e. they were allowed to keep the Passover. At the Passover the services of so many priests were required, that the former priests of the high places were necessarily permitted to help. Cp. v. 22. The meaning of the verse is that the priests of the high places when brought to Jerusalem were not admitted to the status of full priests. For parallel instances see Ryle's note on Ezra ii. 63.

10. *Topheth*] The context shews that this is the name of the spot on which children were burnt to Molech. It has been suggested (on rather slight evidence) that the meaning of the name is, 'The fire-place.'

the children of Hinnom] So the *Kēthīb*; the *K'ērī* however (with LXX. Vulg. Targ. Peshitta) reads *the son* (sing.) *of Hinnom*. Cp. Jer. vii. 31; xix. 6.

Molech] Cp. 1 K. xi. 5, note on *Milcom*.

11. *he took away*] The same Heb. verb is rendered 'he put down' in v. 5. Josiah put an end to the custom of assigning horses to draw the chariots of the sun in religious processions.

kings of Judah had given to the sun, at the entering in of the house of the LORD, by the chamber of Nathan-melech the chamberlain, which was in the precincts; and he burned the chariots of the sun with fire. And the altars that were ¹² on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the LORD, did the king break down, and ¹beat *them* down from thence, and cast the dust of them into the brook Kidron. And the ¹³ high places that were before Jerusalem, which were on the right hand of the mount of ²corruption, which Solomon the king of Israel had builded for Ashtoreth the abomination of the Zidonians, and for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, and for Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon, did the king defile. And he brake in pieces the ³pillars, ¹⁴ and cut down the Asherim, and filled their places with the bones of men. Moreover the altar that was at Beth-el, and ¹⁵ the high place which Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made, even that altar and the high place

¹ Or, *ran from thence*

² Or, *destruction*

³ Or, *obelisks*

at the entering in of the house] Rather, that they should not enter into the house.

the precincts] Heb. *parvarim* here, but *parbar* in 1 Chr. xxvi. 18. These precincts were on the west of the Temple, and consisted perhaps of open colonnades. The original word is Persian, and signifies, 'lighted by the sun.'

^{12.} *on the roof of the upper chamber of Ahaz*] This translation is grammatically impossible. The meaning of the Hebrew probably is, 'on the roof [of the Temple] by the upper chamber of Ahaz.' Nothing however is known of this upper chamber. The account of Ahaz's work in the Temple (xvi. 18) is very obscure.

which Manasseh had made] Cp. xxi. 5.

beat them down from thence] The Hebrew does not yield a satisfactory sense. The right reading may be *carried them out thence*.

^{13.} *on the right hand*] i.e. on the south.

the mount of corruption] A detached summit of the Mount of Olives situated to the south of the road to Jericho, overlooking Kefr Silwan and called *Jebel Batn el-Harud*, is sometimes named 'Mons offensionis' and identified with this mount.

which Solomon...had builded] Cp. 1. K. xi. 5, 7, notes.

^{14.} *the pillars...the Asherim*] Cp. 1 K. xiv. 23, note. Destruction of pillars and Asherim is commanded in Deut. xii. 3.

- he brake down; and he burned the high place and stamped
 16 it small to powder, and burned the Asherah. And as
 Josiah turned himself, he spied the sepulchres that were
 there in the mount; and he sent, and took the bones out
 of the sepulchres, and burned them upon the altar, and
 defiled it, according to the word of the LORD which the
 man of God proclaimed, who proclaimed these things.
 17 Then he said, What monument is that which I see? And
 the men of the city told him, It is the sepulchre of the
 man of God, which came from Judah, and proclaimed these
 things that thou hast done against the altar of Beth-el.
 18 And he said, Let him be; let no man move his bones. So
 they let his bones alone, with the bones of the prophet that
 19 came out of Samaria. And all the houses also of the high-
 places that were in the cities of Samaria, which the kings of
 Israel had made to provoke *the LORD* to anger, Josiah took
 away, and did to them according to all the acts that he had
 20 done in Beth-el. And he ¹slew all the priests of the high
 places that were there, upon the altars, and burned men's
 bones upon them; and he returned to Jerusalem.
 21 And the king commanded all the people, saying, Keep

¹ Or, *sacrificed*

15. *and he burned the high place*] The text is faulty; a high place could not be 'burnt.' Cp. 1 K. xi. 5, note. LXX. has, *καὶ συνέτριψεν τοὺς λίθους αὐτοῦ*, 'and he beat the stones thereof small.'

16. *according to the word of the LORD*] See 1 K. xiii. 2.

18. *that came out of Samaria*] By this description 'the old prophet that dwelt in Bethel' is meant. Cp. 1 K. xiii. 11, 31, 32.

19. *in the cities of Samaria*] Samaria was an Assyrian province, but by the eighteenth year of Josiah the empire of the Assyrians was already tottering to its fall. Josiah met no resistance from the Great King in his reforms, but on the contrary he was able to assert himself in the north. Cp. 2 Chr. xxxiv. 9.

20. *he slew*] Better as marg., *he sacrificed*. The priests were slain upon their own altars. Cp. v. 5, note.

21—23 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxv. 1—19). JOSIAH'S PASSOVER.

This Passover is fully described in the parallel passage of Chronicles. There the Levites, including the 'singers, the sons of Asaph,' are represented as taking a very important part in the feast. This full description is to be regarded only as a reconstruction of the scene based on the writer's knowledge of the practice of his own day.

the passover unto the LORD your God, as it is written in this book of the covenant. Surely there was not kept such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah; but in the eighteenth year of king Josiah was this passover kept to the LORD in Jerusalem. Moreover they that had familiar spirits, and the wizards, and the teraphim, and the idols, and all the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah and in Jerusalem, did Josiah put away, that he might confirm the words of the law which were written in the book that Hilkiah the priest found in the house of the LORD. And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and

¹ Or, *even in all...and of*

² Or, *perform*

21. *as it is written*] The ordinance of the Passover is given in Deut. xvi. 1—8. There the victim may be taken 'from the flock or the herd'; in Exod. xii. 3—5 the victim can only be a lamb.

22. *from the days of the judges*] In 2 Chr. xxxv. 18, 'from the days of Samuel the prophet.'

23. *in the eighteenth year*] The Passover was held in the spring in the month Abib. This month, according to Exod. xii. 2, was to be reckoned the first month of the year. It can however hardly have been so reckoned in the days of Josiah. In his eighteenth year took place, *first*, the repair of the temple (xxii. 3 ff.), *secondly*, a cleansing of the temple and of the land from the symbols of idolatry (xxiii. 4 ff.), and *thirdly*, a great celebration of the Passover. The first two measures cannot have been carried out in the thirteen days of Abib which preceded the Passover. Probably therefore the year is reckoned as beginning in the autumn in the month Tishri after the manner of the 'civil' year.

24—27. THE LORD'S WRATH NOT TURNED AWAY.

24. *them that had familiar spirits*] Cp. xxi. 6; 1 Sam. xxviii. 3—25; Isa. viii. 19. Such persons professed to be able to communicate with the spirits of the dead.

teraphim] The Heb. word *tērāphīm* is left untranslated in R.V., but A.V. has 'images.' LXX. in Kings has *θεραφεῖα*, but in Genesis *εἰδωλα*, 'idols.' The word is plural in form, and probably also in meaning. The *teraphim* were religious symbols, perhaps images, for household use (Gen. xxxi. 19, 30, called 'gods'; 1 Sam. xix. 13). They were consulted as oracles (Ezek. xxi. 21; Zech. x. 2).

that were spied] Lit. *that were seen*; Aquila, *ἃ ὤπαθον*. LXX. simply, *τὰ γεγροντα*, Vulg. *quae fuerunt*, 'which happened.'

the words of the law] Deut. xviii. 10, 11.

25. *before him*] Cp. xviii. 5, note.

with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him.
 26 Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had
 27 provoked him withal. And the LORD said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and I will cast off this city which I have chosen, even Jerusalem,
 28 and the house of which I said, My name shall be there. Now the rest of the acts of Josiah, and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the chronicles of the kings of Judah?
 29 In his days Pharaoh-necoḥ king of Egypt went up against

with all his heart, &c.] Cp. Deut. vi. 5.

26. *Manasseh*] Cp. xxi. 11—16; xxiv. 3, 4; Jer. xv. 4.

27. *out of my sight*] Rather, out of my presence.

25—30 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxv. 20—27). THE EPILOGUE OF JOSIAH'S REIGN.

The accounts of Josiah's death given here and in Chron. differ widely from one another. Both begin with the statement that Necoḥ (Neco) king of Egypt went up for battle on the Euphrates, but from this point the accounts are different. According to Chron. Josiah *went out* (the word often suggests hostility) *to meet* Necoḥ, but in Kings the statement is simply that the Jewish king *went to meet* Necoḥ, an expression used of peaceful journeys. Cp. xvi. 10 (Ahaz meets Tiglath-pileser); 1 K. xviii, 16 (Obadiah meets Ahab). The Chronicler then narrates that Necoḥ sent to Josiah deprecating his hostility; that Josiah refused to be appeased; that he came to fight *in the valley of Megiddo*, and that he was mortally wounded by the archers. His servants then took him out of his chariot, presumably his war-chariot. Of all this nothing is said in Kings. We are told simply that *Necoḥ slew Josiah in Megiddo when he saw him*; in other words there was no parley such as Josiah sought; the Egyptians killed him in Megiddo as soon as he came within sight of their king. The words suggest an assassination; there is no hint of a battle. Josiah no doubt hoped to be confirmed in his kingdom by Necoḥ, but the Egyptian preferred to have a vassal of less energetic character. Thus we must conclude that there were two different traditions regarding the manner in which Josiah met his death, and that one of these has been adopted in Kings, the other in Chronicles.

29. *Pharaoh-necoḥ*] This was Nekau II. (reigned 610—594 B.C., Flinders Petrie, *History of Egypt*, III. 335), who, according to Herodotus (II. 159), conquered the 'Syrians' at 'Magdolos,' and captured 'Cadytis a great city of Syria.' Herodotus no doubt alludes to the

the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him. And his servants carried him in a chariot³⁰ dead from Megiddo, and brought him to Jerusalem, and buried him in his own sepulchre. And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah, and anointed him, and made him king in his father's stead.

Jehoahaz was twenty and three years old when he began³¹ to reign; and he reigned three months in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah

campaign of Necho which is recorded in Kings and Chronicles, though it is improbable that the victory over *the Syrians at Magdolu*s is another form of the tradition of a defeat of *the Jews at Megiddo* preserved in Chronicles. Necho's enterprise (circ. 608 B.C.) was no doubt connected with the great movement in Western Asia which resulted in the downfall of the Assyrian Empire. The last king of Assyria, Sin-shar-ishkun (Saracos), was at war with Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon. The latter called in the Medes to help him, and Nineveh itself was besieged by them. The statement of Herodotus (i. 106) that *the Medes captured Nineveh* seems now to be confirmed by an inscription of Nabu-na'id king of Babylon, first published in 1896. This event took place in 607—6 B.C. Probably Necho's intention was to secure some part of the spoils of the falling Empire. He was however disappointed, for in 605 B.C. he was utterly defeated at Carchemish on the Euphrates by Nebuchadrezzar (Jer. xvi. 2), and was forced to retire to Egypt.

the king of Assyria] It is sometimes taken for granted that Josiah was a tributary of the Assyrian empire, and that he would naturally take up the quarrel of his Assyrian suzerain. But Assyria was very weak after the death of Asshur-bani-pal in 625 B.C., and it is more probable that the kingdom of Judah was able to maintain to a large extent its independence.

went against him] Rather, *went to meet him*.

Megiddo] Cp. 1 K. iv. 12, note.

30. *the people of the land took Jehoahaz*] The populace chose Jehoahaz rather than his older half-brother Jehoiakim. Cp. v. 35. According to 1 Chr. iii. 15 he was the youngest of the four sons of Josiah. The right of primogeniture was not always recognised in the matter of succession to the throne. Cp. the case of Solomon and Adonijah (1 K. i. 5—10, Prefatory Note).

31—35 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 2—4). JEHOIAHAZ DEPOSED IN FAVOUR OF JEHOIAKIM.

31. *Jehoahas*] Called 'Shallum' in 1 Chr. iii. 15; Jer. xxii. 10—12. *Hamutal*] She was the mother also of Zedekiah (xxiv. 18).

32 of Libnah. And he did that which was evil in the sight of
 33 the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done. And
 Pharaoh-necoh put him in bands at Riblah in the land of
 Hamath, ¹that he might not reign in Jerusalem; and put
 the land to a ²tribute of an hundred talents of silver, and a
 34 talent of gold. And Pharaoh-necoh made Eliakim the son
 of Josiah king in the room of Josiah his father, and changed
 his name to Jehoiakim: but he took Jehoahaz away; and he
 35 came to Egypt, and died there. And Jehoiakim gave the
 silver and the gold to Pharaoh; but he taxed the land to
 give the money according to the commandment of Pharaoh:
 he exacted the silver and the gold of the people of the land,
 of every one according to his taxation, to give it unto
 Pharaoh-necoh.

36 Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began
 to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and his
 mother's name was Zebidah the daughter of Pedaiah of
 37 Rumah. And he did that which was evil in the sight of

¹ According to another reading, *when he reigned*. ² Or, *fine*.

Libnah] Cp. viii. 22, note.

32. *his fathers*] Such as Ahaz, Manasseh, and Amon. Josiah of course is excluded. The compiler of Kings wishes to point out that there was an unfaithfulness of long standing, for only such a sin could be appropriately punished by so terrible a punishment as the Babylonian Captivity. Jeremiah predicts the fate of Jehoahaz, that he should never return from exile, but says nothing about his character.

33. *Riblah*] According to Baedeker, *Palestine*, page 377 (ed. 2), Riblah is $7\frac{1}{2}$ hours south of Homs on the Nahr el-'Asi.

that he might not reign] The text is to be preferred to marg.

a tribute] Better as marg., *a fine*. It was to be regarded as a punishment on the people of the land for setting up a king without Necoh's permission.

an hundred talents] Probably 25 tons of silver. See v. 5, with note.

34. *changed his name to Jehoiakim*] The meaning of the name is, 'JEHOVAH will confirm it.' Jehoiakim probably was obliged to swear by the name of JEHOVAH to be faithful to Necoh. His new name is intended to remind him of his oath.

and died there] Jer. xxii. 12.

35. *he taxed the land*] Rather, *he made a valuation of the land*. Cp. xv. 20. He raised a kind of Income Tax.

his taxation] Rather, *his valuation*.

36—XXIV. 7 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 5—8). THE REIGN OF JEHOIAKIM.

36. *Rumah*] Possibly the *Arumah* of Jud. ix. 41.

the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done. In 24 his days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years: then he turned and rebelled against him. And the LORD sent against him 2 bands of the Chaldeans, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, ac-

37. *he did that which was evil*] Cp. Jer. xix. 3—5; xxii. 13—19; xxvi. 20—23; xxxvi. 9—26. The prophet accuses the king of oppression of the poor and of shedding innocent blood. Jehoiakim slew a certain prophet named Uriah, and sought to put Jeremiah himself to death. He burnt the roll of Jeremiah's prophecies in defiance of the warnings which they contained. He practised idolatry.

his fathers] Cp. v. 32, note.

CH. XXIV.

1. *Nebuchadnezzar*] A more accurate form of this name is *Nebuchadrezzar*, as in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. It represents the *Nabukudurri-usur* of the Inscriptions. The name is said to mean, 'O Nebo, defend the crown' (or 'the boundary'), Nebo being a divinity who was regarded as the son of Marduk the great god of Babylon. Nebuchadrezzar reigned 604—561 B.C., and was succeeded by Evil-merodach (Amil-Marduk) (xxv. 27). The only purely historical inscription of his reign which is still preserved relates to a campaign in Egypt in the year 568 B.C. Cp. Jer. xliii. 10—13. The accounts of him given in Dan. ii.—iv. are not to be regarded as historical, but rather as stories told for the sake of the moral they convey, as Old Testament parables indeed. Nebuchadrezzar's subjugation of Judah was no doubt part of a large scheme which aimed at the conquest of Egypt. The kings of the Chaldeans took up the policy of their predecessors the kings of Assyria. Indeed the Chaldean empire might be described as the Assyrian empire revived, with Babylon as the capital instead of Nineveh. The dominions and the ambitions of the two empires were almost the same.

2. *bands of the Chaldeans*] Apparently Nebuchadrezzar made no attempt to take Jerusalem, being probably engaged nearer home, but his officers and clients led marauding bands into Judah and laid the country waste. The Chaldeans were the men of the marshes and of the canal-intersected country south of Babylon, who had imposed a king of their own race (Nebuchadrezzar) on Babylon. They were thus distinct from the Babylonians, but they formed the kernel of the armies of the new empire. Hence Nebuchadrezzar is called 'king of Babylon,' while the warriors who overthrew Judah and Jerusalem are called 'Chaldeans.'

Syrians...Moabites...children of Ammon] The Chaldeans, having first conquered these, used them as auxiliaries in the subjugation of their neighbours. Cp. Jer. xxxv. 12 ('the army of the Syrians').

3 cording to the word of the LORD, which he spake by the
 4 hand of his servants the prophets. Surely at the command-
 5 ment of the LORD came this upon Judah, to remove them
 6 out of his sight, for the sins of Manasseh, according to all
 7 that he did; and also for the innocent blood that he shed;
 8 for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood: and the LORD
 9 would not pardon. Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim,
 10 and all that he did, are they not written in the book of the
 11 chronicles of the kings of Judah? So Jehoiakim slept with
 12 his fathers: and Jehoiachin his son reigned in his stead.
 13 And the king of Egypt came not again any more out of his
 14 land: for the king of Babylon had taken, from the brook of
 15 Egypt unto the river Euphrates, all that pertained to the
 16 king of Egypt.

8 Jehoiachin was eighteen years old when he began to

3. *for the sins of Manasseh*] Cp. xxi. 11 ff.; xxiii. 25, 26.

8. *So Jehoiakim slept with his fathers*] The compiler of Kings says no more concerning the results of Jehoiakim's rebellion against Nebuchadrezzar than that the marauding bands of the Chaldeans and their confederates laid Judah waste. Of the fate of Jehoiakim himself there is no word. On the other hand it is stated in 2 Chr. xxxvi. 6, 7; Dan. i. 1, 2; 1 Esd. i. 40, 41 that Nebuchadrezzar carried the Jewish king off to Babylon together with 'some' of the vessels of the Temple. This statement, however, seems to be due to a confusion between Jehoiakim and his son Jehoiachin, who was indeed so carried off with many of the Temple vessels. Since, however, Jehoiachin reigned only 'three months' (Hebrew inclusive reckoning), it is probable that the punishment which overtook him was intended for his father. Jehoiakim escaped, it seems, by dying before Nebuchadrezzar could take vengeance. From Jer. xxii. 18, 19 we may probably conclude that he met his death under unhappy conditions in or near Jerusalem itself. He may have been assassinated, like many of his predecessors.

7. *came not again any more out of his land*] At this time, as at many others, the Egyptians were content to sit still (Isa. xxx. 7). In their own country in the midst of the network of waterways formed by the branches of the Nile they were formidable, but outside their own frontiers they shewed but little daring.

the brook of Egypt] Cp. 1 K. viii. 65, note.

8-17 (cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 9, 10). JEHOIACHIN. THE FIRST CAPTIVITY.

8. *Jehoiachin*] In 1 Chr. iii. 16 *Jeconiah*; in Jer. xxii. 24, 28 *Coniah*. The essential (Hebrew) elements of the name are the same in these three forms.

reign; and he reigned in Jerusalem three months: and his mother's name was Nehushta the daughter of Elnathan of Jerusalem. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done. At that time the servants of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up to Jerusalem, and the city was besieged. And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came unto the city, while his servants were besieging it; and Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign. And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel

¹ Or, *eunuchs*

eighteen years old] His father Jehoiakim died at the age of thirty-five or thirty-six (xxiii. 36), but it is possible that his eldest son was eighteen at the time. The reading of Chron., *eight years old*, is hard to reconcile with the denunciation of him in Jer. xxii.

Elnathan] This name is found also in the form *Nathanael* (John i. 45) and abbreviated to *Nathan*.

9. *that which was evil*] Cp. Jer. xxii. 20—30.

10. *the servants of Nebuchadnezzar...came up*] The Heb. text shews signs of hesitation between this reading and a shorter reading, *Nebuchadnezzar came up*. The latter agrees with LXX.

12. *and his mother*] Cp. xi. 1 (note on *Athaliah*); 1 K. ii. 19, note; xv. 13.

his servants] The great ministers of state. Cp. 1 K. x. 5, notes.

officers] Marg. *eunuchs*. Eunuchs from time to time are appointed to high office, and even to military command, in the East. For a modern instance see Layard's interesting account of the governor of the province of Isfahan, whom he met in 1840 (*Early Adventures*, pages 114—118, ed. 1894).

in the eighth year] i.e. of Nebuchadnezzar's reign.

13. *And he carried*] Or, *And one carried*. The subject is indefinite; the work was done by the Chaldean army.

cut in pieces all the vessels of gold] Probably this means not the cutting up of golden cups and the like vessels, but rather the cutting off of the overlaying of gold from walls and pillars. Cp. xviii. 16, where it is said that Hezekiah 'cut in pieces the doors of the Temple' (literal translation) in order to send gold as tribute to the king of Assyria.

- had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said.
- 14 And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and the smiths; none remained, save
- 15 the poorest sort of the people of the land. And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon; and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his ¹officers, and the ²chief men of the land, carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon.
- 16 And all the men of might, even seven thousand, and the craftsmen and the smiths a thousand, all of them strong and apt for war, even them the king of Babylon brought
- 17 captive to Babylon. And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

¹ Or, *eunuchs*

² Or, *mighty*

as the LORD had said] Cp. xx. 17, where, however, nothing is said regarding the Temple treasures.

14. *And he carried away &c.*] This verse is written in a later style of Hebrew, and is apparently meant to be a summary statement of the facts given in vv. 15, 16.

ten thousand captives] This took place in the *eighth* year (v. 12) of Nebuchadrezzar. In Jer. lii. 28 it is said that in the *seventh* year 3023 Jews were led away. In spite of the difference of date and number it is probable that the same event is referred to in both passages, for in the parallel case the *nineteenth* year of Nebuchadrezzar (2 K. xxv. 8) seems to be the same as the *eighteenth* year (so called) of Jer. lii. 29. Plainly there was some doubt which year was to be reckoned the first of Nebuchadrezzar. The discrepancy as to the number of the captives is due no doubt to the use of different sources. The higher number (10,000) is perhaps an official Chaldean reckoning in which no discrimination was made between natives of Judaea and other captives who were brought from Palestine at the same time. Cp. note on xxv. 21.

smiths] A smith was a valuable servant in himself, and a dangerous power to leave in the hands of an enemy. Cp. 1 Sam. xiii. 19. Assurbanipal (*K.I.B.* 11. 210) says, 'The bowmen...artisans...and artificers (?), whom I carried away as booty from Elam I added to my royal forces.'

the poorest sort] The same Heb. phrase is translated 'the poorest' in xxv. 12. The statement that only the poorest remained must be understood with some qualification, for some men of leading were left to help the new king, Zedekiah. Cp. xxv. 19; and especially Jer. xxiv. The prophet Jeremiah was one of those who were left in Judah.

17. *Mattaniah*] The name means, 'Gift of Jehovah.' The new name, *Zedekiah*, means 'Jehovah is my righteousness'; the bearer of it

Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began 18 to reign; and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem: and his mother's name was ¹Hamutal the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah. And he did that which was evil in the sight 19 of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done. For through the anger of the LORD did it come to pass in 20 Jerusalem and Judah, until he had cast them out from his presence: and Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. And it came to pass in the ninth year of his 25 reign, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, that Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came, he and all his army, against Jerusalem, and encamped against it; and they built forts against it round about. So the city was besieged 2

¹ Heb. *Hamital*

is expected to maintain righteousness in his dealings with his suzerain, who imposed upon him an oath of allegiance in the name of JEHOVAH. Cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 13; Ezek. xvii. 11—14 (a very interesting passage).

18—XXV. 7 (= Jer. lii. 1—11; cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 11—13; Jer. xxxix. 1—7). THE REIGN OF ZEDEKIAH.

Very little is said concerning Zedekiah in the book of Chronicles, but the book of Jeremiah contains many notices of him. See Jer. xxiv.; xxvii. 12—xxix. 32; xxxii. 1—5; Ezek. xvii. 11—21; xxi. 25.

18. [*Hamutal*] Heb. *Hamital*. The form with 'i' is supported by the LXX. here and also in xxiii. 31; Jer. lii. 1.

19. [*that which was evil*] He would not listen to Jeremiah, and he broke his oath to the king of Babylon. Ezekiel in exile addresses him as 'wicked one' (Ezek. xxi. 25).

20. [*For through the anger...in Jerusalem*] The text seems to be faulty. Probably we should read, **And the anger of the LORD arose against Jerusalem.** Cp. Ps. lxxviii. 21; 2 Chr. xxxvi. 16.

[*Zedekiah rebelled*] He did this in reliance on help from Egypt. Cp. Jer. xxxvii. 5 ff.; Ezek. xvii. 15. Jeremiah consistently advised the king to submit to Babylon (Jer. xxi. 1—10; xxxiv. 1—3, 21, 22; xxxvii. 6—10; xxxviii. 17—23).

CH. XXV.

1. [*in the ninth year &c.*] Cp. Ezek. xxiv. 1, 2. [*built forts*] Cp. Ezek. xxi. 22 [27, Heb.].

3 unto the eleventh year of king Zedekiah. On the ninth
 day of the *fourth* month the famine was sore in the city, so
 4 that there was no bread for the people of the land. Then
 a breach was made in the city, and all the men of war *fled*
 by night by the way of the gate between the two walls,
 which was by the king's garden: (now the Chaldeans were
 against the city round about:) and *the king* went by the way
 5 of the Arabah. But the army of the Chaldeans pursued
 after the king, and overtook him in the plains of Jericho:
 6 and all his army was scattered from him. Then they took
 the king, and carried him up unto the king of Babylon to
 7 Riblah; and they ¹gave judgement upon him. And they
 slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the

¹ Or, *spoke with him of judgement*

2. *unto the eleventh year*] The agony was prolonged, partly through the natural strength of the city, partly through the momentary success of the king of Egypt in raising the siege (Jer. xxxvii. 5).

3. *of the fourth month*] The number of the month is supplied from Jer. lii. 6. When the months are designated by numbers, the first month, the beginning of the year, is to be reckoned from the spring. The fourth month would thus correspond roughly with July.

4. *fled by night*] The word 'fled,' wanting in the Hebrew, is supplied from Jer. lii. 7.

the gate between the two walls, which was by the king's garden] This gate was situated near the pool of Siloam (Neh. iii. 15, 'Shelah' = 'Shiloah'). Of the 'two walls' mentioned perhaps one included the old pool, while the other excluded it from the limits of the city. The remains of two such walls have been discovered (Bliss and Dickie, *Excavations at Jerusalem 1894—1897*, London, 1898), though it has not been proved that these remains are as old as the Chaldean period. Siloam is on the south-east of the city, so that it was a good starting place for a flight towards the Jordan valley.

the Arabah] A name given to the deep valley running from north to south in which the Jordan flows. The plural of the word is used in v. 5, 'the *plains* of Jericho,' by which is meant the western part of the valley. When the eastern part is intended the phrase 'the *plains* of Moab' may be used.

6. *Riblah*] Cp. xxiii. 33, note.

they gave] Better (as Jer. lii. 9), *he* (Nebuchadrezzar) *gave*.

7. *put out the eyes*] A punishment inflicted by Assyrian kings on those whom they condemned as rebellious. As late as 1840 it was commonly inflicted under the same circumstances by the Shah of Persia (Layard, *Early Adventures*, page 345, ed. 1894).

eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him in fetters, and carried him to Babylon.

Now in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the 8 month, which was the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem: and he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house; 9 and all the houses of Jerusalem, even every great house, burnt he with fire. And all the army of the Chaldeans, 10 that were *with* the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about. And the residue of the 11 people that were left in the city, and those that fell away, that fell to the king of Babylon, and the residue of the multitude, did Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard carry away captive. But the captain of the guard left of the 12

in fetters] The Heb. word is of the dual form; it probably means 'with two chains.' Cp. Acts xii. 6. Zedekiah remained in custody till his death (Jer. lii. 11).

8—21 (= Jer. lii. 12—27; cp. 2 Chr. xxxvi. 18—20; Jer. xxxix. 8—10).
THE SECOND CAPTIVITY. FURTHER PUNISHMENT INFLICTED BY NEBUZARADAN.

8. *the seventh day*] According to Jer. lii. 12, *the tenth day*. The Peshitta has *the ninth day*.

Nebuzaradan] A name compounded like *Nebuchadnezzar* with the name of the god Nebo (Nabu). It signifies, 'Nebo giveth seed (i.e. a son).'

captain of the guard] LXX. ἀρχιμάγειρος, 'chief cook.' The Heb. word *šabbāh* means 'one who slaughters' either animals (for food) or men (enemies); in 1 Sam. ix. 23, 24, it is translated, 'cook.' The two functions were originally performed by the same men.

a servant of the king] He was one of Nebuchadnezzar's favoured officers; 'one who stood before the king,' in the language of Jer. lii. 12.

10. *brake down*] Probably all that is meant is that sufficient breaches were made in the walls. The addition of the word *all* ('all the walls') in Jer. lii. 14 is probably an overstatement. Cp. xiv. 13.

11. *those that fell away*] During the prolonged siege and the famine which accompanied it some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem fled from the city to the Chaldeans (Jer. xxxviii. 19), partly perhaps owing to the warnings given by the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. xxxviii. 2). Jeremiah himself was charged with attempting to desert to the enemy (Jer. xxxvii. 13).

of the multitude] Read, *of the artificers*. So Jer. lii. 15, marg.

- poorest of the land to be vinedressers and husbandmen.
- 13 And the pillars of brass that were in the house of the LORD, and the bases and the brasen sea that were in the house of the LORD, did the Chaldeans break in pieces, and carried
- 14 the brass of them to Babylon. And the pots, and the shovels, and the snuffers, and the spoons, and all the vessels of brass wherewith they ministered, took they away.
- 15 And the firepans, and the basons; that which was of gold, in gold, and that which was of silver, in silver, the captain of
- 16 the guard took away. The two pillars, the one sea, and the bases, which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD;
- 17 the brass of all these vessels was without weight. The height of the one pillar was eighteen cubits, and a chapter of brass was upon it: and the height of the chapter was three cubits; with network and pomegranates upon the chapter round about, all of brass: and like unto these had
- 18 the second pillar with network. And the captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, and Zephaniah the

12. *and husbandmen*] This translation follows the Heb. text of the parallel passage, Jer. lii. 16, but the Heb. word used there is a *ḥraṣ* *λεγόμενον*, and both the form and the meaning are uncertain. The Heb. (consonantal) text of Kings as it stands should be translated, **and for the cisterns**, i.e. *and for the care of the cisterns*, lest they should fall out of repair, or be choked, and so there should be a lack of water, a very important consideration in Palestine.

13. *the pillars of brass*] Described in v. 17. The two pillars called Jachin and Boaz are meant (1 K. vii. 15—22).

the bases] The ten bases (1 K. vii. 27—37) were the stands on which the ten lavers (1 K. vii. 38, 39) were placed. Probably the 'lavers' are to be understood as included, unless Ahaz had melted them down (xvi. 17).

the brasen sea] 1 K. vii. 23—26.

14. *pots*] Cp. 1 K. vii. 40 (note), 45; Exod. xxvii. 3.

15. *basons*] Cp. 1 K. vii. 45, note.

16. *without weight*] 1 K. vii. 47.

17. *The height &c.*] See note on 1 K. vii. 15.

and like unto these &c.] Read, **and the second pillar had pomegranates like unto these upon the network**. A comparison with the parallel passage, Jer. lii. 22, suggests that the word 'pomegranates' has fallen out.

18. *Seraiah*] 1 Chr. vi. 14; Ezra vii. 1. He was an ancestor of 'Ezra the scribe.'

the chief priest] Cp. xxii. 4, note.

Zephaniah] He was sent by Zedekiah to enquire of the LORD from

second priest, and the three keepers of the ¹door: and out ¹⁹ of the city he took an ²officer that was set over the men of war; and five men of them that saw the king's face, which were found in the city; and the ³scribe, the captain of the host, which mustered the people of the land; and threescore men of the people of the land, that were found in the city. And Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard took them, and ²⁰ brought them to the king of Babylon to Riblah. And the ²¹ king of Babylon smote them, and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Hamath. So Judah was carried away

¹ Heb. *threshold*² Or, *eunuch*³ Or, *scribe of the captain of the host*

Jeremiah (Jer. xxi. 1; xxxvii. 3). Cp. also Jer. xxix. 24—29, from which it appears that he and the rest of the priests were urged in letters from Babylon to take strong measures against Jeremiah. Though we cannot speak with certainty of Zephaniah's own attitude, it is clear that the priests were among the chief opponents of the great prophet (Jer. v. 31; xx. 1; xxvi. 7, 8).

the second priest] Cp. xxiii. 4.

keepers of the door] Cp. xxiii. 4.

19. officer] Cp. xxiv. 12, note.

five men of them that saw the king's face] i.e. five of the king's confidential advisers; in Jer. lli. 25, the number is given as *seven*. Cp. Esth. i. 14, 'the seven princes of Persia and Media, which saw the king's face, and sat first in the kingdom.'

the scribe, the captain of the host] The only grammatical rendering. Marg. agrees with Jer. lli. 25, but there the Heb. reading is slightly different. For an illustration of the nature of the duties performed by military scribes, cp. 1 Mace. v. 42, 'Now when Judas came nigh unto the brook of water, he caused the scribes of the people to remain by the brook, and gave commandment unto them, saying, Suffer no man to encamp, but let all come to the battle. And he crossed over the first against them,' &c.

21. So Judah was carried away] At this point in the narrative there is an additional passage in Jer. lli. (vv. 28—30) giving an estimate of the numbers carried away captive under Nebuchadrezzar, thus:

(1)	In the seventh year of Nebuchadrezzar	. 3023
(2)	In his eighteenth year 832
(3)	In his twenty-third year 745

Total 4600

It is clear that (1) refers to the event related in xxiv. 12—16 as belonging to the eighth year of the king of Babylon, (2) similarly refers to the event assigned in xxv. 8—11 to the nineteenth year of the same

- 22 captive out of his land. And as for the people that were left in the land of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had left, even over them he made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam, the son of Shaphan, governor.
- 23 Now when all the captains of the forces, they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah governor, they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Seraiah the son of Tanhumeth the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah the son of the Maacathite, they and their men.
- 24 And Gedaliah sware to them and to their men, and said unto them, Fear not because of the servants of the Chaldeans: dwell

king. To what captivity (3) refers it is impossible to say, but the name of Nebuzaradan is connected with it. That the Jews should be transported in batches is only what we should expect, but the low total of 4600 does not agree with the detailed statement of xxiv. 16, and is in itself improbable. Perhaps the writer gives the number only of those whose names were preserved in lists drawn up by the Jews themselves.

22—26 (cp. Jer. xl. 5—9; xli. 1—3; xliii. 4—7). GEDALIAH APPOINTED GOVERNOR. ASSASSINATION OF GEDALIAH.

22. *Gedaliah*] Cp. xxii. 3, note on *Shaphan*. This family as a whole seemed inclined to listen to the warnings of Jeremiah, and to submit to the Chaldeans.

23. *Tanhumeth the Netophathite*] A comparison with Jer. xl. 8 suggests that some words have fallen out of the text, which there reads, 'Tanhumeth, and the sons of Ephai the Netophathite.' There was a village in Judah not far from Bethlehem called 'Netophah' (Ezra ii. 22), and there were 'villages of the Netophathites' close to Jerusalem (1 Chr. ix. 16).

Jaazaniah] Called *Jezaniah* in Jer. xl. 8.

the Maacathite] i.e. inhabitant of Maacah, which seems to have been a district of Syria (2 Sam. x. 6). Jaazaniah was therefore of foreign descent.

24. *Fear not because of the servants of the Chaldeans*] Read (with LXX.) **Fear not the passing through of the Chaldeans**, i.e. do not be afraid of the passing to and fro of Chaldean armies in Judah. Nebuchadnezzar was expected to follow the example of his predecessors, the Assyrian kings, and to attempt the conquest of Egypt. This involved the passage of Chaldean forces along the coast road by the Mediterranean and the occupation of some Judæan cities, such as Libnah and Lachish, which lay on the flank of an army marching against Egypt. Gedaliah, however, assures the Jews that they will remain unharmed, if they will remain faithful to the king of Babylon.

The *servants of the Chaldeans* whom the Jews are not to fear would

in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. But it came to pass in the seventh month, 25 that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldeans that were with him at Mizpah. And all the people, both 26 small and great, and the captains of the forces, arose, and came to Egypt: for they were afraid of the Chaldeans.

And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of 27 the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah

be the officious dependents of Babylon, e.g. the Edomites, whose conduct is described in Ps. cxxxvii. 7. In Jer. xl. 9 a third reading is found, *fear not to serve the Chaldeans*; it is a possible reading, but not likely to be correct. The difference in the Heb. consonants which distinguishes any one of these three readings from the other two is slight.

25. *in the seventh month*] i.e. of the year mentioned in v. 8.

at Mizpah] Mizpah was the seat of Gedaliah's government (Jer. xl. 10). It is mentioned as a *rendevous* for Israel in Jud. xx. 11, 1 Sam. vii. 5.

26. *all...arose*] From Jer. xli. 11—15 it appears that Johanan the son of Kareah marched against Ishmael, and that Ishmael made good his escape. Johanan and the rest made a show of consulting Jeremiah as to their next step (Jer. xlii.), but they rejected his word, and took refuge in Egypt (Jer. xliii. 1—7).

afraid of the Chaldeans] Because Ishmael the murderer had escaped, and they would be unable to surrender him, when the Chaldeans demanded his person for punishment.

27—30 (=Jer. lli. 31—34). THE ADVANCEMENT OF JEHOIACHIN.

27. *Evil-merodach*] In Babylonian, *Amil-marduk* ('man' or 'servant of Marduk,' Marduk being the great god of Babylon). He succeeded his father Nebuchadrezzar in 561 B.C., and reigned less than two years, being assassinated by Nergal-shar-uzur (Neriglissar), who followed him on the throne in 559 B.C.

did lift up the head of] Or, *did accept the person of*, i.e. 'took notice of.' The phrase is generally but not always used in a good sense (Gen. xl. 13, 20). A kindred expression is 'lift up (or 'accept') the face of.'

28 out of prison; and he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in
 29 Babylon. And he changed his prison garments, and did eat bread before him continually all the days of his life.
 30 And for his allowance, there was a continual allowance given him of the king, every day a portion, all the days of his life.

28. *spake kindly to him*] Lit. as LXX: ἐλάλησεν μετ' αὐτοῦ ἀγαθά, 'spake with him good things.'

29. *changed his prison garments*] Cp. Gen. xli. 14. *eat bread*] Cp. 1 K. xiii. 19, note.

30. *all the days of his life*] Like Chronicles, the book of Kings ends with a gleam of hope.

QUAECUMQUE SCRIPTA SUNT
 AD NOSTRAM DOCTRINAM SCRIPTA SUNT.

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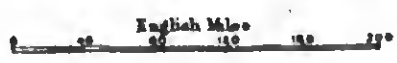




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